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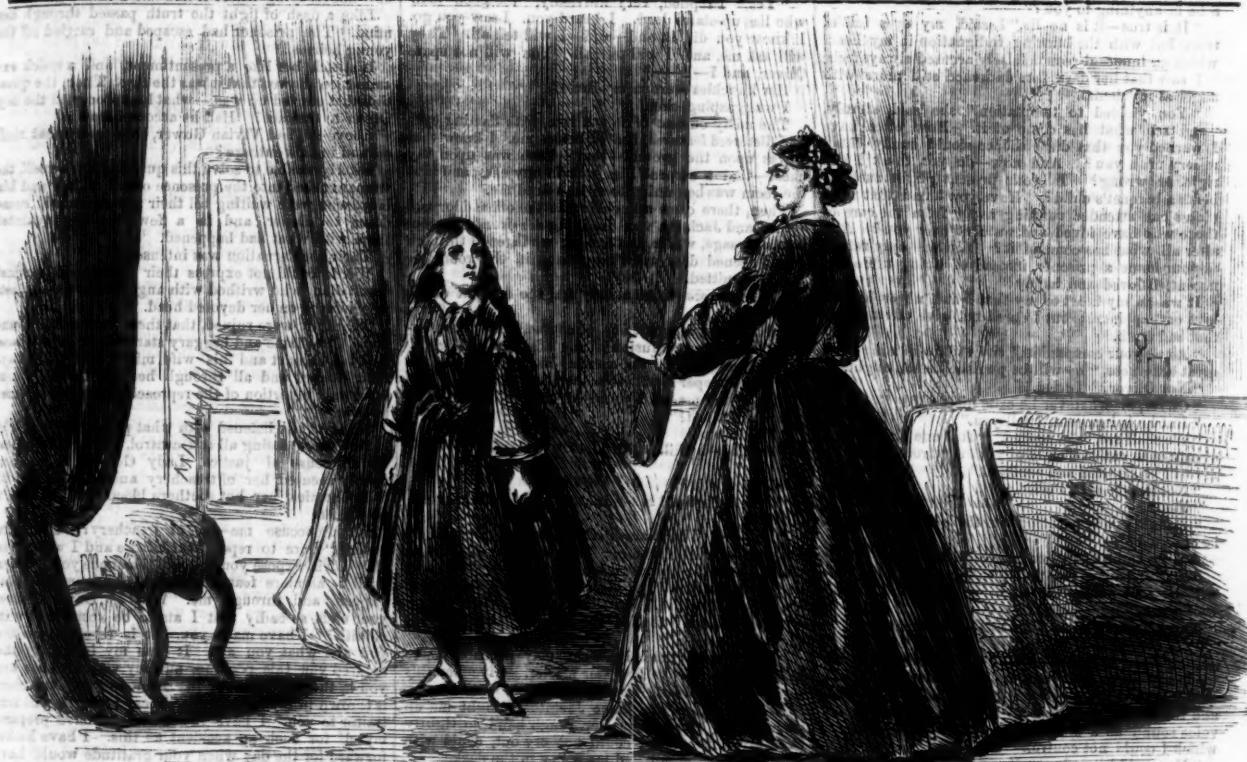
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[THE HEROINE'S LIFE IN DANGER.]

THE WRONG DRESS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"The Golden Mask," "The Stranger's Secret," "Man and His Idol," "The Warning Voice," &c., &c.

CHAPTER XI.

MY LIFE IS IN DANGER.

I made a picture of her in my mind—
A wicked woman, weary of her life,
Herself, her soul, her wickedness, at strife
With God and heaven. Shuddering, I knew
She hated all the world, and desolate,
Turned on herself the remnant of her hate.

ANON.

Thus far the secret had been kept.

My flesh creeps as I recall the feelings with which I heard of the lawyer's sudden death, and associating it with all I knew—and I alone of all under his roof knew—came to the conclusion that he had been foully murdered, and that by Jacintha's hands.

There was certainly the possibility that with his deplorable habit of relying on narcotics for sleep, he might have taken an overdose, and so ended his own life.

But the bare fact of Jacintha's presence in the house was in itself suspicious.

Her possession of the letter intended for Vivian Gower (she had, as I afterwards learned, sent a servant after the clerk with another letter, and a message to the effect that the wrong one had been given him) was most significant.

The snatches of soliloquy I had overheard completed my conviction as to the truth of the suspicions I entertained.

With indescribable loathing I shrank from Jacintha as a murderer.

And this loathing was even surpassed by terror, when I came to reflect on what had prompted this terrible crime.

"What?" I asked myself, "can be the nature of that secret which has to be kept at such a price? What is the bond of mutual interest between Sir Gower Anselm Gower and this Italian, his domestic, so strong

that the latter does not even hesitate at sacrificing human life to preserve a secret in which they are mutually interested?"

That this secret concerned me, closely and vitally, I could not doubt, and the conviction only added to my uneasiness.

No one in the Plunkett household displayed more consternation than the new housekeeper. She was eloquent, in that ardent, impassioned way natural to foreigners, over the fate of the dead man in whose service she hoped to find a happy home. Her tears flowed freely, her eyelids were red, her cheeks wan and sallow, and she seemed inspired by genuine grief. A black ribbon or two added to her already sombre dress, aided the effect.

Not a breath of suspicion lighted upon her.

When the police came to investigate, she was not even questioned.

At the inquest her evidence was not called for.

She had been so short a time in the service, the coroner sagaciously remarked, that she could know nothing of the habits of the deceased, and consequently could throw no light on the cause of his death!

My presence in the house created far more remark than hers did. No one knew—for she was supposed to be ignorant—who I was, or for what purpose I came there. The clerk, who had admitted his master on the preceding night, Jasper Newton, by name, deposed that I had arrived with him in the carriage, but I had not been expected, nor did the deceased's papers throw any light on his object in bringing me home with him.

Of course the Italian did not say a word as to her knowledge of me. She confined herself to stating the name she had found on the clothes I wore—that of Norton—and adding that, by my own account, I had been taken by Mr. Plunkett from a factory somewhere on the outskirts of London.

No opportunity was afforded me of adding anything to that statement; had it been, I should probably have stood too greatly in fear of my old attendant to avail myself of it.

With regard to the deceased, at the first aspect of the case it seemed only too probable that he had come

by his death in a perfectly natural, though lamentable, way, through the narcotics taken in an overdose, and medical evidence on this point satisfied the jury to that effect.

There comes back upon my memory, with singular vividness, that evening after the inquest.

The quiet and dulness of the house weighed oppressively on my spirits. The office part of the house was closed—the last clerk had gone—and I sat alone with Jacintha in the gloomy dining-room, more gloomy now than ever from the white blind drawn down over the window, and shutting out the lurid evening sky.

My sense of the horror of the dead body, lying upstairs, yet seeming to fill the house with its presence, was only surpassed by the shrinking, shuddering feeling which my companion inspired in me.

It was so terrible to think that she had been guilty of murder, and that we two sat there, almost alone, under the same roof with her victim!

To a child's mind nothing was impossible under such circumstances,—not even the appearance of the deceased dead, there, at the half-open door, glaring with fierce eyes, and pointing with an accusing finger.

Terrified at my own fancy, I put my hands before my eyes and shuddered.

The movement on my part, slight as it was, startled the Italian out of a reverie, and she looked towards me.

"Julius," she then half-whispered, "I have something to say to you. Come here!"

I rose from my seat, and went towards her; but lingered at the table.

"Here," she cried in her old imperious way, pointing to a footstool at her feet, "are you afraid of me?"

I suppose my face expressed too clearly the terror that was in my mind; but I dared not disobey, and so crept closer; but dropped into a chair before I reached her.

I could not endure the thought that she should touch me with her murderous hands.

To my relief she did not insist on my coming nearer; but bending on me a severe gaze, said:

"You were enticed away from Gorewood Place?"

"No," I feebly answered.

"You deny it? I expected you would do so. One step in wickedness leads to another. A child of your age, capable of what you have done, is sure to be capable of screening such conduct with untruths. You did not hesitate to leave your mother heart-broken, nor your good father, and as to me—if I was nearly frantic it was nothing to you. And how should a lie be anything to you?"

"It is true—it is no lie," I said, my eyes full of tears, but with the burning indignation in my heart which an innocent person falsely accused always feels;

I saw that her dark face darkened still more with anger at my denial.

"You yielded to temptation," she said, sternly, "and see what has come of it. How often have I warned you that disobedience would surely entail misery upon you? And now—do you think I was right or wrong? Is your present plight such as befits a baronet's child? Have you found that happiness has attended running away from the care of those who have loved and watched over you? And after all, what has come of it? You will only return to your home a prisoner, instead of living there innocent, beloved and happy!"

It was in my heart to say that I had never known love or happiness; but I dared not give utterance to that sad truth.

"As to your companion," she said, resuming with great bitterness, "he will be punished as he ought."

"Not Oliver?" I cried.

"Oliver, or whatever he calls himself."

"But he is innocent, I tell you."

"We shall see," she replied. "It is one of the worst of crimes to entice a child of your age from her home. He will be arrested and confined."

"Not in prison?" I cried.

"Yea."

"But they will not keep him there? They cannot be so cruel?"

A grim smile lit up her saturnine face.

"No," she answered, "they will transport him. He will be sent across the seas. A fit reward for his wickedness!"

Never have I felt as I did at that moment.

I am conscious of having started to my feet, and of glaring upon the Italian with a vindictive ferocity, while my limbs quivered and my hands clenched. While I stood thus, my eyes seemed blinded with light, and there was a singing in my ears that made my voice sound at a distance as I shrieked out words which I could not control.

"No, no!" I heard myself say, "they shall not. It shall never be! He is good, he is innocent. It was me—I am to blame. I will go to them and tell them so. He did not know I was not a boy and couldn't go to sea with him. How should he think that? I did it all. Alone, alone—I did it all, and I will tell them so."

Jacinta's clutching hands upon my shoulders, and her tall figure standing over me, caused me to stop.

"Are you a crazed child?" she asked in her sternest tones. "Be silent. Not another word. Be silent and hear me."

I was not frightened, but I could feel that I ceased speaking.

The voice that rang in my passion-deafened ears was not my own, but Jacinta's.

"Dare to repeat to other ears what you have just said," she exclaimed, "and I will not answer for your life. You are too young to understand your position, or the intentions of those interested in you—or anything but your duty to obey—your duty to obey implicitly, and without a question. As to this low, vulgar, wretched boy, who has turned your head, and sent you frantic—dismiss him from your thoughts, for you will see him no more. Trouble yourself about his fate no farther, for you will never learn what it is, or what it may be. And mark me—we speak of this now for the last time. Understand—for the last time."

I understood her words, but I cared nothing for them.

Frantic with alarm for him I retorted:

"I will see him. I will save him."

"You dare me?" the Italian demanded.

"He is innocent. I must save him," I replied, scarcely conscious of what I said.

"Against my wishes?" she exclaimed. "Against my commands?"

"I will tell them all," I muttered, stubbornly.

Her hands were still upon my shoulders, her fierce eyes and angry face on a level with my own.

"Thwart me," she said, with her white teeth set edge to edge, "and I will kill you."

The threat might have been an idle one; but I did not think it. I knew her to be capable of what she threatened. Still I was not afraid: my love for Oliver blinded me to all sense of apprehension for myself.

"Kill! Ah, yes, you can kill!" I cried out, bitterly, "it is your way to kill as you did him, last night. You killed him!"

"Him!" she ejaculated.

As she did so her hands dropped from my shoulders, and she recoiled with a face livid with horror.

"Him?" she repeated, as I gazed at her, trembling at my own audacity. "Him?"

"Yes," I replied, very hurriedly, "the good man who lies up-stairs dead. I heard you. I saw you go. I know you did it, and—and—I will tell all. They will ask me, and I will tell all. You will not spare Oliver, and I—I—"

Her knuckles were in my throat.

I was gasping, choking.

The misty outline of a dark face, with flaming eyes and distorted features, floated before me. I knew that I was upon the ground—that a knee was upon my chest—that a serpent hiss was in my ears, and that the room was beginning to swim round me.

Then, there came a knocking at the office door and voices, and Jacinta was dragging me from the room into a passage, where, in the dark, we listened through a half-opened door to what passed in the room we had just quitted.

The speakers were a lady and the servant of the house.

"This terrible event has, of course, thrown the establishment into confusion?" the lady was asking.

"Oh yes, ma'am," the servant answered, "but the new housekeeper was here a few minutes ago."

"And—tell me—did your poor master return home last night, alone?"

"No, ma'am."

"He had—a child with him?"

"Yes."

"Where is it?"

"It was here not ten minutes ago with the housekeeper."

"Indeed! They are perhaps in another room. Pray seek them for me. That child is—is one in which I take the deepest interest. Pray let the housekeeper know that I desire most particularly to see her—with the child."

"Yes, ma'am," replied the servant, about to quit the room.

"Stay!" cried the lady, "she may probably have heard my name from her poor master. Give her this card—*Mrs. Vivian Gower*."

At the sound of that name Jacinta caught me up in her arms, and passing her rough hand so tightly over my mouth that I could not cry out, could with difficulty breathe, hurried me away in the dark.

CHAPTER XII.

WHAT HAS HAPPENED.

Listen, and I will all of this impart.
How these events, so strangely falling out,
Were by design accomplished, with intent,
And of a given purpose. *The Bondman*.

Here let me interrupt my own personal narrative. There are facts necessary to be recorded before I resume the thread of it.

And, first, as to what had followed my escape and that of my companion from Gorewood Place.

I had left Jacinta, it will be remembered, asleep in the orchard.

When she awoke, started out of a dream, her first thought was of me. She looked around, I was nowhere visible. She called, I did not answer. It was incredible! Throughout the years she had held me in subjection I had never disobeyed her strict order never to quit her side without her express permission. In effect, I had never quitted it.

The secret she was set to guard—the secret of my sex—she had guarded well. Strangers, domestics, all had been kept aloof; if suspicion of the truth had become whispered abroad in any quarter, it was not through her negligence, or any laxity in her despotic sway.

But it was in the nature of the task she had undertaken, that, though scrupulously performed for years, it might at any moment be rendered of no effect.

An instant's negligence might reveal the secret, and then all would be lost. It was like the poet's notion of the Lady of Shalott, who wove the magic web day and night, and who had—

Heard a whisper say,
A curse is on her if she stay
To look down to Camelot;
She knew not what the curse might be.

And so with Jacinta, she hardly dared conjecture what might result from a moment's inattention.

Yet in spite of this she had slept, and I was gone!

To search the orchard and the grounds, to examine every corner of the rambling old house, was her first and immediate step.

It was fruitless labor, for the Italian had been right. Then came the questioning of the servants, quietly,

one by one; but they had seen nothing, could impart nothing.

Frantic with consternation the Italian saw nothing before her but to go at once to Sir Gower and his lady and confess what had happened.

But, first, one more turn in the orchard. I might yet be loitering there. No; no sign of the fugitive! But as she retraced her steps, and passed under the turret, her quick eyes detected the iron bar of the window above, lying where it had fallen in the grass.

Like a flash of light the truth passed through her mind. The prisoner had escaped and carried off the young heiress!

It struck her like a presentiment, and a quick examination showed that it was the case. Then, the question that started up was,—what had prompted the boy Oliver to that act? Had he accomplices?

Above all, had Vivian Gower, then under that roof, a hand in this outrage?

Utterly unable to solve this question for herself, the woman rushed into the presence of her master and his lady, who were waiting till their guests should come down to dinner, and in a few words acquainted them with what had happened.

Their consternation was intense.

Words could not express their resentment against the Italian, who writhed with anger under the epithets they heaped on her devoted head.

That they were ruined, that they were utterly undone, that shame and beggary stared them in the face, that the baronet and his wife might end their days in a prison, and all through her negligence—these were only a portion of the reproaches she was doomed to hear.

To these she listened with what patience she might.

But when, losing all self-control, and growing deaf to all sense of justice, Lady Gower boldly and openly accused her of treachery and complicity with their enemies, her hot southern blood could endure no longer.

"You accuse me—me of treachery?" she burst forth. "Dare to repeat that charge and I will reveal all. I will expose you. I will denounce you. There shall be no more fear of what may happen; it shall happen, and through me. What! Have I served your ends so badly that I am to be accused of want of faith? I have made you. It is through me that you are what you are. It was my ingenuity that secured you this position, and my vigilance has kept you in the enjoyment of it. And now my treachery is thrown in my teeth? Treachery; yes, I will name traitor to you. I have the means. I have prepared myself for such an accident as this. I have looked forward for the day when your gratitude would have been forgotten, and when there would be nothing left for me but to exercise the solitary virtue of my country—revenge!"

As a tigress lashes itself into rage, so this Italian woman suffered her mind to dwell on the indignity that had been offered her till she was fearful to look at—her eyes burning, her mouth foaming, her lips figure dilating with passion.

The haughty baronet and his proud wife were still cowed and dismayed by the storm they had unconsciously raised; and before the last suggestive threat had been given utterance to, their sudden anger had subsided—they had grown humble, submissive, deprecatory to their own domestic!

In a pleading voice Lady Gower—who had always regarded this woman with a jealousy she had with difficulty concealed—entreated her to remember their provocation, and their natural consternation at the discovery of the peril in which they stood.

The baronet added an entreaty to be permitted to beg pardon, most humbly, for the offense committed, and thereupon, after a time, Jacinta consented to be appeased, and to forgive the aspersion on her character.

So the breach was healed, and then came the important question of what was to be done to recover the fugitives?

Before anything could be decided on, the visitors came down to dinner.

From the moment of entering the room they became objects of the closest scrutiny. And when the news was communicated by Sir Gower, the effect of it was watched with a painful intensity.

And what was the effect? Surprise, of course, was strongly expressed, surprise and agitation. There was, moreover, a flushing of the cheek, and an exchange of furtive glances not to be mistaken.

These symptoms were supposed to indicate guilt.

The real source of them lay in a conviction on the part of Vivian Gower and his wife that their object in coming to Gorewood Place had been detected, and that this pretended disappearance was a mere ruse to get the heir to the baronetcy out of the way during the visit of the adverse branch of the family.

With affected commiseration, but with covert sneers, therefore, Vivian and Vivian's wife expressed

their concern, and advised that messengers—the keepers and labourers on the estate—should be sent out to scour the country in all directions, and, farther, that the county constabulary should be set on the alert.

Sir Gower assented with a ready "of course, of course," but the advice was not acted upon.

Even the servants were not apprised of the disappearance of these young master, until it became impossible to conceal the fact any longer; or, as I have since suspected, until the fugitives were supposed to have wandered far beyond the chance of being encountered and recognized by any one of them.

When the news was permitted to spread, one fragment of information soon came to hand. It was ascertained that an old shepherd, while driving his flock to drink at a meadow pond some five miles on the road to the sea, had noticed two lads walking hand in hand, both evidently strangers to the road from the eager and enquiring manner in which they looked about them.

They had gone in the direction of the nearest seaport.

This having been ascertained, and there being very little question but that these were the fugitives, gone, none knew, few cared, to what far distant place, Sir Gower Anselm Gower promptly, and without hesitation, took the steps he ought to have taken at the very first.

He roused the neighbourhood.

Handbills describing the heir of Gorewood Place, and wrongly describing his companion, were scattered broadcast.

Meanwhile Jacintha set off alone in pursuit, in the direction the shepherd had indicated. Pursuing her course slowly and cautiously, and making enquiries as she went, in a careful and guarded manner, she arrived at length at the identical roadside inn—that kept by Becky Twinch—at which Oliver and his companion had stayed. Information afforded her by a carter, one of the frequenters of the house, caused her to go there, and she arrived in time to be quite certain that those of whom she was in search had left. An enquiry or two, received by the sharp, angular Becky with a very bad grace, awoke suspicions of something like foul play in her mind; but she kept these suspicions to herself, determined to wait for what in the way of discoveries might happen to turn up.

Her patience and sagacity, exercised at the cost of a day's loss of time, were rewarded by a voluntary communication which Becky, in a moment of weakness and good-humour, eventually made to her, over a cup of tea of which they were partaking.

"You've asked me," she said, "about two boys as come this way and stopped under this roof a fortnight come 'Waydah?" she broke out.

"Yes," was the reply of the surprised Italian.

"You're interested in 'em, I suppose?" asked Becky.

"I am."

"In both of 'em?"

Her keen gray eyes watched eagerly for the answer. Jacintha saw that some trap was laid for her, and hesitated: then, acting on a principle of hers always to speak the truth, when no advantage was to be derived from doing otherwise, she replied:

"No."

"Which one?" was the quick enquiry.

"I only know of one," said the Italian, "a little lad, with a pretty face and bright hair."

"A little girl, you mean?" cried Becky, indignantly. "Oh, I know," and she folded her bare arms so tightly that they looked like a single arm. "There's mysteries and there's goin's on, which I won't bemean myself to pry into; but the turn it give me when I heard that poor dear say as Julius was her name—which Caesar it might ha' been, and Pompey, too, and none the wus—no tongue can tell."

"A woman of your experience will understand that family reasons sometimes—"

So Jacintha began to reply. At those words Becky Twinch's eyes brightened, and she stayed to hear no more. Unwinding and separating her arms, she held up the forefinger of the right hand to bespeak attention, while, with the left, she took from the high mantelpiece a letter she had received by that afternoon's post.

"Read that," she said, "and read it out."

Jacintha obeyed.

It was a letter with an enclosure, and it bore the signature of Martha, or, as she was called, Ann Pegwell.

The letter itself, dated from the hideous flower-garden set forth that an advertisement had been inserted in the papers, describing the finding of a boy named Julius (the fiction of the sex kept up for obvious reasons), and that an answer had been received immediately from a lawyer of the name of Plunkett, who was coming that evening to see, and, as he anticipated, identify the child on behalf of its parents. The letter added that a handsome sum was to be given in compensation for trouble, in the event of the result proving satisfactory.

As Jacintha held this letter in her hand, gazing vacantly at Becky Twinch, who was herself unable to read, two questions flashed through her throbbing brain.

Who was Plunkett?

Who did he represent?

That he was not the family lawyer she knew: besides, even the family lawyer would not have been trusted by Sir Gower with the identification of the lost heir.

"Who then—?"

Before the question could be repeated, there was the answer, bright and ready to her mind.

In the course of the embarrassing after-dinner conversation on the first evening of the Vivian Gower visit, a chance allusion had been made to Vivian's lawyer—Plunkett—that was the name, and to his being in search of some decent woman to take charge of his house, as the housekeeper who had been with him seven and thirty years had died suddenly.

Here was the clue.

Vivian Gower, or his wife, had caught at the advertisement, and in order to steal a march upon Sir Gower, had instructed Plunkett to apply, as on behalf of the afflicted and distressed parents.

The name being the same gave a colour to the transaction.

Keenly, incisively, the subtle intellect of the Italian saw through this stratagem at a glance. Saw the precipice, on the brink of which Sir Anselm stood. Saw, also, that upon her, and her alone, depended the frustration of the plot, and the safety of the family secret.

Looking at her watch, she found that it was growing late. Glancing then at the letter, to see the Pegwell address, and ascertaining from Becky that it was near London, and distant some hundred miles from where they sat, she at once saw that it was useless to entertain any hope of reaching the flower-garden in time to confront the enemy, or even of telegraphing to the Pegwells, warning them not to part with the child at their peril.

One course only presented itself.

She was a mile from a railway station, so she was informed; but by starting at once it would be possible to take train, so as to reach London that night. It would be late; but there might be the chance that she might see Plunkett; and the circumstances under which this name had first reached her ears suggested to her quick brain the pretext by which she would gain admission to his house.

She would go there as an applicant for the situation of housekeeper!

Before a late moon rising over the great city had transformed its sombre grandeur into splendour, Jacintha had accomplished her design. The journey was over; she stood at Plunkett's door.

In a few words she stated to the clerk in attendance the errand on which she had come, adding that she feared the lawyer was not at home.

"Yes; he was to have gone out in the carriage; but had been prevented by business."

How her heart beat!

Something had occurred to prevent the visit to the flower-garden that night, and before the morrow, she might herself have regained possession of the fugitive, or have insinuated herself into the house so as to be ready to act as circumstances might suggest.

A chance allusion in a conversation with Plunkett's agent, to whom she was referred, led her to conclude that the missing child would be brought to the lawyer's house, and would need looking after at once, and that determined her.

She succeeded in gaining admission there, with the results we have seen.

CHAPTER XIII. FATHER AND DAUGHTER.

Would I had no being

If this salte my blood a jot; it faints me

To think what follows. *Henry the Eighth.*

With thus much by way of necessary explanation, let me resume.

Powerless in the grasp of the desperate woman whom I had so startled, and who found herself suddenly, by the appearance of Vivian Gower's wife, in danger of detection and exposure, I gave myself up for lost.

I had had many proofs of Jacintha's desperation and cruelty. I knew that she had no tenderness, no spark of pity or commiseration in her heart.

With fatal rashness I had opened her eyes to the unsuspected fact that I was dangerous to her.

A word of mine might imperil her life!

What, then, might she not do—what farther lengths of desperation might she not go—to secure her own safety?

As these thoughts stirred in my wretched mind, we reached the end of the dark passage, and descended a flight of steps into a garden. On the opposite side of that, after we had crossed a grass plat, there was a

door, and when this was opened, we were in the street.

Very soon a cab passed, was stopped, and we entered it: my companion gave an address, and we drove off.

Directly we began to move, and Jacintha had satisfied herself, by gazing from the windows, that we were neither watched nor followed, she suddenly threw her arms around me, and pressed me to her bosom, in a sort of transport.

Her breath was quick and hot: her heart throbbed violently against my side, and, by the light of the lamps we passed, I saw that her face was ghastly. She was evidently under the influence of strong excitement.

But she mastered it, by her indomitable power of will, so far that she was able to address me almost calmly.

"Don't tremble, boy," she said, hesitating over the last word, which she probably used only from the force of habit; "I'm not angry. Indeed, indeed, I am not. No: not angry, only hurt; very hurt. I forgot myself for the moment, because I am hot and passionate, and couldn't restrain my feelings. But I ought to have remembered that you are not old enough yet to understand the full meaning of the dreadful words you have used to me. But the time will come when you will understand them, and will know what wrong and wicked words they were to use, and how ungrateful, after all that I have done and suffered for your sake."

There were tears in her voice—so it sounded—but none in her eyes.

Looking up timidly, I saw that they had a cold, cruel, treacherous glitter, that made me all the more anxious to escape from an embrace that was loathsome to me.

The stopping of the cab gave me the opportunity.

We were in a street that was not a thoroughfare, or I should rather call it a court, with one side formed of a blank wall, and the other of a building with innumerable windows, all whitened so as to deaden the light.

At the end of this deserted place was a great red-brick house of a ruinous and forlorn aspect, having rusty iron railings in front of it, and being partially hidden by one or two trees of a black and funeral aspect.

Without any hesitation, Jacintha pushed open areaking iron gate, and led us round under the trees to a side-door, of which she possessed a key.

This admitted us into the house, which was dark, and apparently empty, for the closing of the door echoed through it in a ghostly way, and as we proceeded to mount a flight of stairs with which my companion seemed familiar, and which were only visible from a faint light coming through a skylight far above our heads, the sound of our feet on every stair was repeated on other flights of stairs, in a dismal and startling manner.

Not a word escaped Jacintha's lips as we moved on, and her silence, the iron grasp of her hand, and the utter loneliness and desolation of the house, filled me with vague and horrible misgivings.

My least fear was that I might be left a prisoner in that empty and deserted house, to starve and die, and so be silenced for ever!

But when we had mounted four flights of winding stairs, a light shining under a door reassured me.

As we came to that door Jacintha opened it, without knocking, and we entered.

The light had proceeded from an oil lamp, of a curious form, with two burners, that stood on a table in the middle of the room. The table was covered with papers, so was the floor, and presses and pigeon-holes ranged round the walls were stuffed full of them.

A hasty glance showed me this, and then all my attention was concentrated on the solitary occupant of the room, who was seated at the table, close under the lamp, and bending over an open skin of parchment.

It was an old man, with a face sallow, and shining as if it oozed oil at every pore, and this oiliness seemed to have affected every feature, and rendered it soft, flexible, and undecided. The nose was long, large, and full of movement; the mouth seemed to have no settled shape or size, but made itself up afresh repeatedly out of the restless lips. The cheeks were loose and pendulous, and yet not large enough to hide a muscular, bull-like neck. A black velvet skull-cap, surrounded with snowy locks, ought to have imparted a venerable look, but failed to do so, chiefly, I thought, on account of the eyes, which looked up enquiringly on our entering, were very startling, small, and cunning, and so bloodshot that they looked red, like those of a ferret.

"My child!" cried this personage with surprise, as we entered—a surprise not so intense but that he had the presence of mind to thrust the parchment he was engaged on into a bag at his feet.

"You did not expect me?" asked Jacintha, with a smile, "nor my friend?"

"Eh? Who is this?"

He said it in some alarm, recognizing me for the first time.

"This is he, dear," she replied, and then striding towards him, she threw her arms about his neck, kissed him on both cheeks, and whispered—hissed, as I thought,—a few words into his ear.

He looked up sharply and displeased.

"Here," he exclaimed.

"I tell you there is danger—danger to me," she answered in a tone of passionate remonstrance.

He shook his head incredulously, and only repeated, "Here!"

Seldom brooking to be thwarted, this opposition to her will seemed more intolerable to Jacintha than usual. She resented it with an outburst of angry protestation.

"I come to you in my trouble, and pour the secret of my danger into your ears, and this is your answer! This is your love—this is your affection! An utter stranger could not have been more indifferent."

"Nay, nay, you wrong me, my child," said the old man, whose voice was soft and coaxing—an oiled voice, so to speak—and with a slightly foreign accent in it. "I have never been indifferent to your interests. All I have will be yours."

He spread his hands out so as to indicate the entire room, as if all those dusty papers and crowded presses represented wealth; as I afterwards found they did.

But Jacintha turned from him impatiently.

"Would to heaven you were poorer than the poorest!" she exclaimed.

"Oh, no, no, no!" he cried, rising with a look of horror, as if she had uttered a profanation.

"It is my wish, my prayer," she persisted; "then you might be human. Then you might have some thought, or care, or heart towards your own child. What has your money ever brought you but misery? What do I owe to it, but a wicked, desolate, wasted life? It was my rock-a-haüs from the first. When but a girl my fresh young voice charmed all ears, delighted all listeners, it made only one appeal to you—my father. You thought only how it might be brought into the market and coined into money. You had me trained; you guarded me as a mine of wealth, brought me before the public, brought me to England, and here, in the very moment of triumph, lost all your pains. The miserable climate of this detested country ruined my voice, and worse, worse than that even, lost me the one thing which I then coveted, a child's place in your heart. You ceased to love me, to care for me; my presence became intolerable to you, and I fled—a fatal step, never, never to be retraced."

"Your own act, Jacintha," said the other, in his oiled voice; "your own act."

"No! yours, father—yours! What but your avarice became my ruin? What but the sense of loneliness and disgrace, brought on by no fault of mine, drove me into the clutches of Jerome the operasinger—Jerome the burglar now? Had your love sustained and shielded me, I should have been saved; but no, you thought only of your gold, your bargains, your traffickings, and I, your child, fell, before your very eyes."

"Well, well; this is not a pleasant—"

"Pleasant! Do I recall it for pastime? If it offends you in the hearing, do you think it gives me satisfaction in the remembrance? But I recall it, because what your indifference made me then paved the way to the peril I stand in now. Had your gold been less to you, and your child more, Jerome had never tempted me into crime. The affair of the diamond bracelet would never have happened. True, I did hate the woman, who had supplanted me in the public favour, not so much for the triumph her voice secured her, as for her patronizing arrogance; and out of the hate I had for her, I did arrange the theft of the Marchess's diamonds, so that suspicion might fall on her. But whose fault was it that I was able to incite Jerome to that act?—that I had sufficient influence over him? Whose fault was it that when the crime was brought home to him, and he was convicted and transported, I fell into the hands of those who had ruined his professional career, and made him one of their degraded selves? It was your doing. All yours, all yours!"

Little impressed by the torrent of invective poured on him, the old man leaned back in his chair, fiercely biting at the top of the pen with which he had been engaged when we entered.

"You are unjust to me," he now said, "angry and unjust. In all I do I have only your interests at heart."

"You mean that your days and nights are spent in accumulating that for which your own child may come to wish you dead," she retorted.

He looked at her with a shudder, and an oily perspiration oozed from his brow.

"You don't mean it, Jacintha?" he said. "It's a jest! Tell me, it's a jest, nothing more. An awful jest!"

He sighed heavily, and sat with a scared look, trembling.

The idea of the possibility that his own child might desire his death for the sake of his wealth, seemed to have struck to his heart like an arrow.

It was a minute or so before he recovered himself, and during that time the woman's face did not relax in its stern rigidity. When he could force a smile, making up his fleshy lips for the purpose, he made an attempt to throw off the idea lightly, as if it was of no moment.

"A jest, of course," he said. "I am afraid to-night. A jest, yes; of course, of course. Why, nothing could come to you, not even to you, my child, unless I willed it to you. And I may have willed it to others, eh? Who knows, eh? Who knows?"

He laughed, expecting Jacintha to join in the mirth, but she did not. Perhaps her thoughts were busy with other matters. Resuming the conversation abruptly, she said:

"But you have not granted my request?"

"But I will," he replied, "and then I must wish you good-night; for I'm busy—very busy. And I wish our little friend good-night, too."

His daughter beckoned me to her.

"We sleep here to-night, Julius," she said.

I went forward and shook hands with the old man, who made up his mouth afresh to kiss me, and then passed with Jacintha through a door at the farther end of the great room, that led into a small, roughly furnished bed-chamber.

"You will sleep there," said my companion, pointing to the narrow couch. "The moonlight is strong enough for you to undress by."

With these words—and without wishing me good-night—she retired, and I heard the door bolted on the outside.

The moonlight gave the chamber a ghostly aspect, and the fear which had come upon me on first entering that lonely house—round which the wind moaned with a wailing voice—returned. It was not lessened when I discovered that, though the door was bolted, there was what appeared to be a large cupboard, dark and empty, and so vast that, though I ventured a good distance into it, I could feel no wall or obstruction.

It seemed like the entrance to a passage in the wall, and I lay my head on my pillow, wondering with what part of the house it formed a secret communication, and whether anything would come of it?

As I lay listening, I could half fancy that groans sounded at intervals in the dark closet, and my heart sank within me.

But my fears for myself were strangely intermingled with apprehension for the old man, alone with the woman whom I so feared and suspected, and who was clearly his hoiree, in that solitary house.

(To be continued.)

SCIENCE.

LIGHTING OF PUBLIC HALLS BY MAGNESIUM.—At a meeting of the Royal Institution, Mr. Larkins exhibited his method of illuminating public halls by the combustion of magnesium. The magnesium, in a finely divided state, is showered on small flames of gas, and thus produces a brilliant illumination. It was the first time the apparatus had been publicly exhibited. The flame was flickering, but the pure quality of the light contrasted strongly with the usual gas flames of the burners in the lecture theatre.

A DIFFICULTY IN THE WAY OF PERPETUAL MOTION.

MR. EDITOR,—I see occasional references by your correspondents to the invention or discovery of perpetual motion. There is one point about this I have never seen referred to, which it seems to me an individual contemplating trying his hand on such invention, would do well to consider—that is, if an individual who seriously contemplates such an effort is sane enough to consider anything.

Suppose a machine were invented which generated its own power, and consequently started and moved itself, by what process or possibility could its motion be restrained or regulated? It must do one of two things—stop, or run itself to death; as it seems to me the laws which govern machines moved by agencies or forces, such as steam, water or horse-power, applied externally, as it were, to the machine, are not applicable to a machine which is expected to develop from its own levers, cranks, wheels, &c., the power which moves it.

Were it possible to develop such a power, it occurs to me clearly, its force must go on increasing and its motion accelerating from the moment of starting until a separation of the parts would necessarily follow.

A governor or regulator, or resistance of any kind, would either stop it entirely, or, failing in that, would prove useless, for any such appliance would only develop a new point of resistance to starting, which, over-

come by the inherent power of the machine, the results would ultimately be the same as if the resistance were not there.

Of course this objection, if well founded, is only one phase of the law which makes any such invention impossible; but it may be that some who cannot see the difficulties or impossibilities in the way of starting a machine, may see the force of this suggestion in case they should get it started. If they cannot be reasoned out of the delusion, they may possibly be terrified from the creation of a monster, which, like "Frankenstein," will be exceedingly apt to crush or devour its creator.

PREPARING CASTS FOR ELECTROTYPEING.

An excellent method has been published by Dr. Heeren, of Hanover, for preparing the conducting surfaces of casts, whether of gutta-percha, wax, or gypsum, from which electrotypes are to be taken.

The surface is well moistened with a nearly concentrated solution of nitrate of silver in alcohol by means of a soft brush. An aqueous solution cannot be employed, because it does not readily moisten fine lines or narrow interstices, and easily runs together into little drops. When the entire surface has been wetted, the excess of the alcoholic solution is wiped away with a drier brush.

The cast is now at once, before the silver liquid dries, exposed to the action of sulphuretted hydrogen; if the object be small, it need merely be suspended for a few moments in a vessel filled with gas. If its dimensions, however, be so great that it cannot be readily moved, a stream of this gas should be made to play upon it from an india-rubber tube. The surface becomes covered with a thin film of sulphide of silver, the alcohol quickly evaporates, and in a few minutes the cast is dry and ready for immersion in the electrotyping bath.

The sulphide of silver is an excellent conductor of electricity, being not inferior to graphite, and is therefore admirably fitted for this purpose; an alcoholic solution of acetate of copper can also be used, but the resulting sulphide does not conduct as well as that of silver. Various kinds of fruit, and the bodies of soft and delicate animals, can be easily electrotyped by this process.

FLITCH GIRDERS.—In 1860 the following experiments were tried at Woolwich Arsenal:—1. Two Memel deals, each 3 in. thick and 9 in. deep, on bearings 17 ft. apart, were bolted together and loaded on the centre until they broke. The breaking-weight was 6,800 lb., and the deflection 4½ in. 2. Similar deals of the same section and bearing were next taken and bolted together with a flitch of wrought iron 9 in. deep, and ½ in. thick, placed between them, and the beam was loaded as before. It broke with 18,079 lb., the deflection being 4½ in. 3. The experiment was repeated on a beam similar in all respects to the last, but the load was distributed over the length. It broke when the weight was increased to 34,862 lb.; the deflection being 4½ in. According to Hurst's formula, the second beam should have broken with 16,009 lb., and the third with 32,018 lb. According to Mr. Tarn's formula the total weight which may be laid on the middle of a flitch beam, 9 in. by ½ in., and 17 ft. between the supports, without injuring its elasticity, is 6,021 lb., the thickness of the iron being to that of the wood as 1 to 20.

WOOD PAPER.—The new works of Messrs. Jessup and Moore, at Manayunk, Philadelphia, for making paper from wood pulp, were begun in 1861, and finished in March, 1862. The buildings cover a space of ground 1,000 ft. in length by 350 ft. in width, and cost 500,000 dollars. A canal and river run alongside, whilst the Flat Rock paper mills in connection with the wood pulp works makes the whole establishment cover an area of 10 acres. They produce 12 tons to 15 tons of wood pulp per diem, and 8,000 lb. of straw pulp. The works belong to a company with a subscribed capital of more than 10,000,000 dollars. These works increase the daily production of printing paper by 13,000 lb. The chief part of the process for making wood into pulp is secret, but this much is known. The wood is first cut up by two choppers capable of cutting 35 to 40 cords of wood per twenty-four hours, and the wooden chips produced are carried to the boilers, ten in number, which turn out 300,000 lb. in pulp in twenty-four hours. In these boilers the chips are boiled in alkali for five or six hours, till the fibres are separated, and then the whole mass, mixed with chemicals, is driven into vats below. The chemicals are withdrawn from the pulp by solution in water. The pulp is then bleached, and finally it assumes the appearance of weak milk. For newspaper printing 80 per cent. of wood pulp and 20 per cent. of straw pulp are mixed, to give the requisite softness and tenacity.

SOUTHWARK BRIDGE.—This is finally to be flung open to the public, the City for once doing its duty, and paying the cost, £200,000.



[WINONA'S ORDEAL.]

THE PRAIRIE LILY.

CHAPTER I.

The old Indian took the waif that the swift tide of the river rolled to his feet, carried it gently up to his wigwam, and laid it in the arms of his wife.

It was a sweet face, with long-lashed eyes that looked up wonderingly into that of the time-wrinkled squaw.

A fair face, surrounded with semi-curling black hair, in which great water beads yet glittered like diamonds; a bud of glorious promise for the future mind, gifted and beauty-endowed; a white child that had not as yet escaped from prattling infancy, and by some strange fatality was reft from home and kindred, and given into the hands of a savage. Beautiful, exceedingly, looked that baby girl, as with her great black eyes, rosy cheeks, and coral-clad lips, she clung to the neck of the Indian woman as if for protection, and with lisping tongue syllabled the dear name of "mamma."

"The arms of the river brought the pale paupers to the feet of the warrior," replied Black Oak to the questioning looks of his wife. "Of her kindred, tribe, or people he knows not. Like a little canoe of silver birch she floated along. The good Manitou guarded her from all harm."

"And my husband will—"

"Keep her as his own. The great Master of Life has, in his wisdom, denied him a son to take his place among the warriors when he has gone, and you a daughter to keep alive the remembrance of your beauty. We will keep her."

"It is well. The Manitou has directed it;" and the hely love of a mother, that had never before been awakened, burst out in all its passionate strength in that Indian woman's heart.

But day by day, as that love increased and strengthened, the wife of the warrior thought of the mother who had lost the fair child. Her own recently awakened feelings taught her how deeply she would have mourned had such an one been taken from her.

Perhaps it might be an only one—the sole hope of a house—the single darling round which the heart-strings were nestled, and upon which the wealth of affection was lavished.

With the vivid and poetical imagination often found among her race, she pictured the grief of the bereaved mother—the sad, silent, and tearful hearth-stone, the vacant cradle and the sob-choked song—until they became a living reality, and she resolved, great as her

sorrow would be at the parting, to search for and restore the little one to home and parentage.

Patiently and long both she and her husband, assisted by the young men and maidens of the tribe, searched, but without avail.

Among the soldiers who had crossed the Platte River (for the glittering dream-land of gold was then undiscovered), they could hear of none who had mourned a child as drowned amid its spring-freshened waters.

Bereft of hope, they must have passed mourning along bearing a gravestone in their hearts, though erecting none over a little mound.

Passed along, perhaps childless, but without leaving a trace that even the subtle eye of an Indian could discover.

As the years slipped along, the Waif of the River, Winona or the Prairie Lily, as the child had been christened upon her adoption into the tribe, grew both in size and beauty.

Scarcely four when Black Oak had rescued her from the dark waters, she was now fast nearing seventeen, and though educated after the manner of the redmen, yet partook of none of their harshness or savage disposition.

Well, indeed, was she named the Lily, for, unlike those around her, she would bend to the storm—not strive to brave it.

Pure in complexion—pure in mind and heart—she exercised a holy and controlling influence, and though her love for the beautiful in dress was tintured by her associations, it was ever picturesque and in good taste.

Time had deepened, if possible, the hue of her long eyelashes and flowing hair. Exercise and life in the open air had strengthened and rounded her form to its full womanly perfection, and her clear complexion, defying sun and wind, was more rosy than in childhood.

There was witchery in her large midnight eyes, and love, never yet awakened, lay sleeping in her lips. With a different temperament she would have ruled as a queen, with hundreds to bow willingly to her sway—as it was, she was child-like and self-sacrificing.

Acting ever upon this principle, she, while healing many feuds among others, found it difficult to retain her own position and liberty.

That she should have been sought for to fill the wigwam of many a young brave was a natural sequence to her beauty; and to decline their offers, and at the same time retain their friendship, or what was the same thing, disarm their revenge, was a task of the utmost delicacy.

Despite her training among those who were naturally and habitually reticent and undemonstrative, the white girl could not command herself.

As soon as she could fully comprehend the matter, she was told all the particulars concerning the strange manner in which she had been thrown, a waif from civilization, into savage life.

But with none to look to for support, she clung to the aged warrior and his wife with all the tenacity of

"My child," said the old warrior, now trembling beneath the weight of over four score and ten years, as he called her where he and his wife were seated, one morning when the prairies and woods were abloom with flowers, and the earth bright in her springtide robes.

"Father!" she answered, kneeling by his side, and looking up intently into his furrowed face, around which the time-silvered locks hung scantily.

"The Black Oak will soon fall before the blasts sweeping up from the dark valley of death. The spirits are whispering to him and his wife, and calling them away. They must soon pass from the earth like the leaves of autumn, and their names be heard no more among men."

"Father! Mother! Do not talk thus of death."

"Listen!" replied the aged woman, gathering Lily's head into her lap, and smoothing back the rippling hair from her sunny brow. "Listen, and let both ears and heart drink in and retain the words. As if soft wax, let the brain receive them—as if stamped upon the rocks of the mountains let their impress be."

"It must be, my child," said Black Oak, without noticing the interruption. "Death comes to all. The canoe has long been waiting to ferry us over the swelling waters to the happy hunting-grounds beyond. We have outlived our time. The snows of nearly an hundred winters have lodged amid our hair, once as black as the wing of a newly-fledged crow. The wreaths that winter twines around the mountain tops are not more white."

"Father, I know that you are both very old, but—but—you will live long yet."

"As the Manitou wills. He alone can keep the bow of life unbroken."

"But, father—mother—what will I do when you are gone?" and tears flooded her beautiful eyes as she thought of her utter loneliness.

"It was to talk of that—to think how the Lily should be guarded when we are gone—that Black Oak called you hither."

"Father, I cannot—dare not think of it. You gone—both gone—I alone! Oh! what will become of me?"

Despite her training among those who were naturally and habitually reticent and undemonstrative, the white girl could not command herself.

As soon as she could fully comprehend the matter, she was told all the particulars concerning the strange manner in which she had been thrown, a waif from civilization, into savage life.

But with none to look to for support, she clung to the aged warrior and his wife with all the tenacity of

a love engendered by long years of kindness. If they were taken away whither should she turn? Alone through the wide world she could not wander in search of relationship.

Fate had cast her lot among the nomad children of the prairie and wild-woods, and Fate alone could restore to her home and kindred.

Bowed down thus with bitter thoughts and fears for the days to come, she dared not look the reality in the face, and could only relieve her overcharged heart by tears.

"Daughter—Winona," continued the warrior, when the first passionate grief had somewhat subsided, "the Manitou made you not, like the Oak, to breast the storm. Like the lily you must bow your head until the wild wind has whistled past. When you were a little papoose the redman and his squaw took you to their hearts, and you have grown there."

"How much I have to thank you for!" murmured the girl, clasping, tenderly, the brawny hand in her own, and pressing it to her lips.

"Like the vine that clings to the sturdy tree for support, you have twined around our very lives, and nothing but death could break the hold. But the old wither and decay. Their trunks are shattered and no leaves cling to their branches. Stricken down, they will soon lie prostrate in the dust, but the young vine will bloom on in freshness and beauty for many years."

"Oh! do not, do not die!" she kept repeating, unmindful that the great Master of Life alone could give and take away.

Had she been his own child—had the blood of the redman run in her veins, he would probably have spurned her for her feebleness—her want of self-reliance and courage.

But now that very feebleness gave her a stronger hold upon his affections, and gently as it was possible for him to do, that stern savage soothed her, and led her to think more calmly of the future.

"Could Black Oak and his wife but see the trail that led to the wigwam of your father," he said, "they would travel it to the end, be it ever so long and crooked. Worn as their limbs are with age, and near as they are to the dark pit of the grave, they would falter not, could they but give you back into the arms of those to whom the great Manitou sent you from the spirit-land. But this may not be, and you, my daughter—our daughter—"

"Left alone!"

"It need not be."

"Not be? Who will there be left when you are gone?"

"The warriors of the Pawnees are many as the blades of grass upon the prairie. Their enemies fear them, and the tramp of their horses' feet, when they rush to battle, is like the sound of the deep-mouthed thunder."

"What have I to do with them?" she asked, innocently, and unthinking of the point to which he was gently and slowly striving to lead her mind.

"Who else have you to look to? Think, my daughter."

"None, alas! none."

"You know not the language of your race. The tongue of a stranger has become your own; you are like a strange bird in the nest of the eagle."

"What shall I, shall I do?"

"From the ranks of the warriors you must choose some one to protect and support you."

"Must? Has it come to this, that you should tell me must?"

"The dying tongue will speak harsh truths that health and strength would gladly shrink from. It were well to choose now."

"Why will not to-morrow—next week—answer?"

"The Black Oak may not see the sun rise again. In the darkness of midnight his spirit may drift away."

"Die! Die, to-night!" and she flung herself upon his breast, and clung to him in the very agony of despair—clung to him as if she would hold him back from death.

"Black Oak may live yet many days," he replied, striving to cheer her, "but when the Manitou is shaking the boughs the fruit will fall. Before he goes, he would know to whom he must give up his child."

"Choose for me. I know not—care not."

"The heart of my daughter can alone decide."

"Then—then—the Medicine of the tribe."

"He, also, is very old, and may be soon called hence. It must be another and a younger."

"Then the chief. He has been the most kind of any, except you and mother."

"He is married and—"

"Married!"

"He who takes care of my Lily in the future must have no wife."

"Father! Black Oak, what can you mean?" asked

the girl, rising in her astonishment and standing rigid as iron before him.

"That my child must fill the wigwam of a warrior—be his wife."

"His wife! the wife of—she would have said "Indian," but the recollection of the more than parental kindness she had received from him checked her.

Many times, too, she had listened to his tales of the pale face—of her own blood and people, and wondered long to be restored to them.

Wondered at their power and wealth and greatness, until fancy created an ideal home replete with the perfume of love, and teeming with all that was beautiful and attractive in earth.

And now, she was to marry an Indian! Familiarity with their manner of treating women, had failed either to convince her of its justice, or taught her to be submissive to such a rule. To her sensitive mind it would have been hourly agony, and now that the true meaning of the old, mistaken, though well intending warrior, was forced upon her, she shrank from it as from contamination the most foul.

"The wife of—? Never!" she repeated, with heavy bosom and quick-drawn breath.

"Are all of the Pawnees, then, disgusting to the eyes of my child?" asked Black Oak, with a sorrowful voice.

"All—disgusting? No, not that. But—I can never marry—will never marry one of them. Do not ask me, I cannot, cannot!"

"The wild rushing stream soon overruns its banks—the quiet one glides smoothly on to the ocean. Think well, my child, before you decide."

"I have decided, long since. When the young braves of the tribe laid their offerings at the door of my wigwam, none were ever taken in. When their duties were heard without, Winona shut her ears to the sound. When they forced upon her wampum, she offered it to the Great Spirit. Upon no single warrior, more than any other, has she smiled. Sooner than become the wife of one of them, she will enter the Council Lodge and become a chief."

"My child! my poor child!" exclaimed the aged squaw, suddenly breaking the silence, "you know not what you say. Better brave death than attempt it. Of the hundreds you have seen attempt it, have any succeeded?"

"None."

"And you would dare its dangers? May the good Manitou keep you in your right mind!"

Long still was the conversation carried on, without any definite result. Firm was the white girl in her resolution not to become the wife of an Indian.

Sooner, fearful as she knew the ordeal to be through which she must pass, she would strive to enter the Council Wigwam, and become one of the chiefs, hoping, perchance, that the day would come when she would again be among her own colour and people.

While Black Oak and his wife lived, she had no danger to fear, and she looked upon death, as all of us are apt to do, as something yet afar.

But he, that grim tyrant, waits no man's pleasure. All times are his.

In the darkness of night, he whispered into the ears of the old warrior, unheard by other mortal ears, the single word "come," and there was no response to the summons.

Soon after, upon another night, he bade the aged wife follow, and the Lily of the Prairie stood alone and unprotected by earthly hands, a prize for the young braves of the Pawnees to battle for.

CHAPTER II.

In the great grief at the loss of her friends and almost parents, Winona found little of sympathy or consolation—none of forbearance.

The young warriors, eager to be the possessor of so fair a prize, all strove to be foremost in the winning, and the girls looked with bitter jealousy upon one who had tempted them to disregard their charms, and sought for an opportunity to disgrace her before the tribe.

From the double web thus weaving around her, there was but one chance of escape, and that was to take upon her the vows of a warrior.

How dangerous such an experiment was, she well knew, especially when surrounded by those who were determined that she should not succeed.

A single whisper against her chastity would be fatal to her hopes, and at the same time place her life in peril; and were there not some among the tribe base enough to stoop to falsehood, to accomplish their ends?

Much it was to be feared, and yet desperate as the chance was, it was the only one left her.

Fearful as was the ordeal, she must not shrink from

it, if she would save herself from being, the bride of a detested, brutal and savage lord.

Rejecting the offers of love, as they were proffered, she avowed her determination, and named the next day as the one upon which she would make the trial, after having pleaded in vain for delay. From man she could expect no help.

Every star was blotted out from her earthly sky, and she could only look beyond to the Great Spirit, of whom she had but the wild and indistinct idea usual among the redmen, though her softer nature and more vivid imagination had taught her heart a truer knowledge of the Deity, than those around her possessed.

"I trust in the Manitou and my own pure heart," she replied to the old Medicine, when he advised her to change her determination.

There was something sublime in the decision in one so young—unfriendly. Sublime in her perfect faith in the purity of her own life and actions, and implicit trust in God.

Sublime in thus braving the dangers that compassed her about, and fearlessly treading in the path that with hundreds had ended in disgrace and death.

The daughters of chieftains had failed, with parents, brothers, sisters, friends, and lovers around them, and how could she hope to triumph, when all were enemies?

"Do not go," urged the Medicine, in whose heart, despite all his trickery, there was a feeling of compassion for the beautiful young girl, and who was anxious to secure her for the wife of a favourite young brave.

"Father, I must!" was the firm reply.

"Do not go, child," he repeated, "the trial is beset with thorns, and dark pits yawn upon every side. Think of Red Elk, who loves you. His wigwam is always filled with furs and game and venison. The softest will be for your wear and sleeping, and the richest for your eating. He can count his braves by hundreds, and the ranks of his enemies are many. Think how all will envy you, when you are his wife. He waits but your answer. Let me go and tell him to come hither; let him lead you to his wigwam and be happy."

"When the wild cherry buds, blossoms and bears fruit in the winter snows, then will I be his wife."

Well the old man knew that such a thing could never be, and sorely disappointed, he gave up the unprofitable discussion, and turned away to take his place among the crowd waiting for the trial.

His every effort had failed, but yet he determined to save her from the death that he felt confident would follow, though he could not from the disgrace.

Dressed in robes the most simple, Winona issued from her wigwam at the summons of the drum, and walked boldly towards the assembled warriors—a dark band of armed men and treacherous hearts, through which she must pass.

Once more the old Medicine urged her to desist, and Red Elk whispered in her ear burning words of his passionate love, and promises of protection.

"Father, friend," she replied, giving each a hand, and turning her pale face, pale as the snowy flowers that were wreathed in her daintily braided hair, to heaven. "Father, friend, I thank you both, but it may not be. Winona has chosen. Medicine, pray for me. Red Elk, if the child of the pale face could have given her heart to a redman, she would have given it to you. Among all of the tribe, she believes you to be the most noble, and loves you—"

"Loves me!" and the frown passed from the face of the young warrior, and his dark eyes flashed forth the triumph of his heart.

"As a sister," she continued, releasing her hand, and now—"

"The warriors are waiting," interrupted the chief. "I am ready," and with her features lighted up as with the assurance of help from on high, she started on her dangerous mission.

Lifting a portion of the veil that had been prepared, she passed through the line of warriors walking her path on either side, towards the wigwam.

Every eye she watched, every face as she walked slowly along. All were black and emotionless as the grave.

Every hand rested upon a knife, and the blades of more than one were nearly drawn from the girdle.

There was not a single ray of encouragement to cheer her. With deep-drawn breath and trembling limbs—with sinking heart and quivering lip—she performed the first and second journey, without a word being spoken.

Once more—the third and last concluded, and all of danger would have been passed. The rest was but fasting and vigil—trials to the body, but none to the mind.

With sparkling eyes, blushing cheeks, and joyful

heart, she gathered up the little load and started again. Half the distance was accomplished. A song of victory was forming upon her lips.

The red wine of life was flooding her heart, and her soul was lifting itself, as upon angel wings, to the good God who had silenced all her enemies. The light of perfect freedom was shining around her.

She was happy beyond her wildest dreams, when suddenly two of the warriors stepped from the ranks, and closing in front barred her way with knife and tomahawk.

"What means this? How dare you hinder me?" she asked, in astonishment.

"She who carries the fuel and lights the fire—she who listens to the secrets of warriors—she who would take a seat in the Council Lodge, must be pure as snow," was the stern reply.

"And am I not? Who dare whisper a word against my name?"

"Little birds have sung it."

"With whom? Let him stand before me."

"Red Elk."

"Red Elk! It is false! Bid him come hither and say that I am unfit to enter the circle of warriors. I dare him to the proof."

"It needs not that he should do so. He has avowed it to the judges. It is enough. He has told that—"

"That I was false to my vows of—" she could not utter the word that blasted her fair fame—repeat the charge that changed the name of maidenhood to shame; and as she heard the shouts of derision that arose from the outer circle of young men and girls, earth and sky swam before her a confused, reeling mass, and she fell fainting to the ground, just as an hundred brawny warriors sprang forward to stain their keen-edged knives in her bright blood.

Thwarted in their murderous designs, for they dare not strike an inanimate one any more than an idiot, or deformed, (both of whom they believed to be especially protected by the Great Spirit,) the warriors of the Pawnees retreated sullenly, and left the old Medicine alone to his work of mercy.

The end had come as he expected, and he was prepared for it.

Still he was greatly astonished that the name of Red Elk should be coupled with that of Winona and infamy, and in his heart he believed it to be false.

But now he had no time for thought; he must first restore her, and then save her life, if possible, for, forsaken by the laws of the tribe, it would soon be demanded.

Calling to his aid a couple of the old women, he removed the senseless girl to his own wigwam, and shutting out all others, began the work of restoration. How his efforts were rewarded none knew. There was ever mystery and secrecy to his movements, and none dare attempt to penetrate into his "holy of holies."

"The spirits of life and death are battling within her heart for mastery," he said, when questioned by the chief as he issued forth an hour after and walked towards the woods. "I go to seek from the vine, the root, and the blossom, the charms that stay life."

"Tell the young men, and let them go; their feet are more swift and their arms more strong."

"It may not be. Alone, and in darkness, and with fasting and prayer, must they be gathered."

"But Winona?"

"I have left her in safe hands."

"Will she be strong enough for the torture to-morrow?"

"If the Manitou wills."

"I will send to see."

But his story, like his life, was a false one. It was neither vine, root, nor blossom he sought; nothing pertaining to bodily cure had he in his mind.

His sole object was to find Red Elk, and learn from his own lips the truth of the strange story that had been bruited about.

A secret and a sure messenger he had sent to demand meeting; and as he tottered down the rough and stony hilside, and neared the stream, he saw the young warrior waiting his coming in a canoe, that lay rocking idly with the tide.

Soon they were afloat, and without a word being spoken, Red Elk paddled down the stream. A couple of miles brought them to a lone rock that split the river; a tall, treeless rock, where no listeners could come or linger unseen.

No better place could by any possibility be found for a private conference, and, confident of security, they took their places upon the summit.

"Tell me," began the aged Medicine, "tell me, Red Elk, you who have ever been to me as a son, if this story is true of the child of the pale faces—the adopted daughter of Black Oak, who but lately was called to the spirit-land, has been false to the vows of maidenhood—if she has stained her fair name with a great crime?"

"First tell me if she lives," asked the young chief hoarsely, and without raising his head.

"She lives."

"And will—"

"Will live, if the warriors put her not to torture."

Upon the bronzed forehead of Red Elk the veins rose and knotted like whipcord; his breast heaved as if mighty billows had taken the place of lungs; his whole form trembled convulsively, and the hold of his hand upon his tomahawk and knife was of iron.

Some giant emotion had struck his savage nature to its very centre, and the old trickster looked with fear upon the storm his words had raised. Cunningly, however, he disguised his feelings, and proceeded:

"Tell me, Red Elk, if the story was true about the Lily of the Prairie having been guilty, and—"

"With me?"

"With you, my son. So it was avowed when she would have become a chief; and had she not fallen, she would now have been wandering in the dark regions of the evil one."

"It is false as the Matcha Manitou!" he replied, with startling emphasis, while every feature told how deeply the blow had fallen upon his fiery heart.

Red Elk had been the one chosen by the old couple who had lately been called home as the only one fit to be the husband of their petted Lily.

By their assistance he had seen more of her than any other—been admitted to their wigwam, and consequently a playmate and companion.

The only ungratified wish of their heart was to have seen them married; but, although they had failed in this, they had unwittingly raised up a strong friend for her.

To the eye of the young warrior she was something more than human; in every attribute she differed from the squaws, and his love, partaking something of her pure nature, had become akin to that he might have had for an angel.

It was the fervent affection of a savage, subdued and spiritualized by mind and beauty; and the blow that had been aimed at her, struck deeply and surely into his own heart.

Had she not been saved from death by fainting, he would have shouted the battle-cry of his fathers and rushed to her rescue, happy in the knowledge that they would die together.

"False, is it?" repeated the old man; "I thought so. And now, my son, we must—"

"Hist!" and crawling like a serpent over the point of rocks, Red Elk lowered himself into the water, and was seen no more by the watching Medicine.

A moment after a canoe, loaded with warriors, dashed up, and a voice demanded:

"Are you alone, Medicine?"

"Alone with the Manitou," replied the crafty old fox; "but my prayer is ended."

And, descending, he entered the canoe that had brought him thither, and paddled slowly away.

If the new-comer had sought to surprise him in consultation, the keen eyesight and cunning of Red Elk had outwitted them; and when they returned home, they found him calmly smoking at the door of his wigwam.

(To be continued.)

NO ROOM IN ROME.—It is calculated that there were nearly sixty thousand foreigners in Rome during the Holy Week. There were several Italian Members of Parliament, with their families; among the Italian ladies was the lady of Signor Urbano Ratazzi, ex-Italian Prime Minister, now in Naples, with her husband. There was scarcely such a thing as a lodging to be had in the whole city, and many people, it is said, slept in carriages, on sofas, or did not go to bed at all.

A DOCTOR at Wolverhampton has cured hydrophobia. The idea is sound upon which he proceeded, and it is a wonder that it was never thought of before. Perhaps it may be the foundation of a general principle of attacking disease, namely, that two antagonistic diseases cannot exist in the body at the same time. The Wolverhampton doctor cured the sufferer from hydrophobia by salivating her, one poison killing the other. It is worth while recording, at any rate, as a success, especially at a moment when so many people in society seem to have been bitten by mad dogs.

THE GRASS TREE.—The grass tree (*Xanthorrhoea*) is to be found in nearly all parts of Australia. Up to a few months ago it was supposed to be only a useless growth, encumbering the land. A few knew from the blacks that it contained a very tenacious gum. The blacks used it as a glue for joining parts of their weapons; but it is only within the last few months that the following valuable articles have been obtained by a Mr. Dodd. The root is the portion used in these experiments, and usually weighs from 10 lb. to 50 lb. The root is composed of the stems growing

in a close mass round the inner portion or kernel. From the outer portion of the root gum shellac in large quantities is obtainable; the refuse contains a large quantity of gas, and can be made available for lighting the works. From the inner portion is extracted, by pressing or distilling, a spirit equal to the best brandy, also alcohol; after distilling a quantity of saccharine matter remains, from which sugar can be extracted. The present supply of grass tree in the neighbourhood of St. Ronan's is computed to be equal to a supply of 600 tons per week for the next ten years.

DISTURBANCES OF THE EARTH.

SINCE the beginning of this year slight earthquakes and volcanic eruptions have been numerous in many parts of the world, but more especially in Southern Europe.

Father Secchi has written from Rome to the Paris Academy of Sciences that in the Valley of the Umbria, near Spoleto, shocks of earthquake were felt on the 1st of February, the 21st of February, and the 17th of March. These shocks have been so violent and continuous as to greatly alarm the country people, and Count Campello, who owns the land which has been the centre of the disturbances, states that they have caused great cracks in the surface soil. These commotions have been confined to a very small district in the valley.

M. St. Claire Deville points out that during the last few months meridional Europe has evidently been the theatre of phenomena having their origin in the eruptive forces of the globe.

Trembling of the earth was felt at Paterno on the 15th of January. On the 22nd of January a boiling eruption broke out at Paterno. On January 28th and 29th, shocks of earthquake were felt in the island of Santorin. January 30th and 31st violent shocks were felt at Santorin, and a fiery volcanic eruption broke out in the harbour.

On the 1st of February a new island rose out of the sea near King George's promontory. On the same day shocks of earthquake were felt at Spoleto. February 2nd a violent shock was felt at Chios, and eleven days before a column of hot water and steam rose out of the sea between the island and the main land, these phenomena being followed by frequent and violent shocks of earthquake. February 7th shocks were felt at Patras and at Tripolitza, February 13th the new island of Aphrodissia rose from the sea in the harbour of Santorin. February 17th an earthquake shook at Nauplia, and on the 21st another at Spoleto.

March 2nd tremblings of the earth near Valona on the Adriatic, and the sea began to boil at this place about seven o'clock at night; shocks also were again felt on the 9th and 10th of March. On the 9th and 10th of March slight shocks were felt at Drontheim and Patras, and another island rose in the Bay of Santorin. On the 10th and 11th of March there was a mild eruption of Vesuvius, and on the 17th another shock at Spoleto.

RECENTLY a torpedo, which was sunk in Charleston harbour over three years ago, exploded in eight fathoms of water. It is said to have lifted an immense volume of water, and presented a grand appearance.

FOR THE CURIOUS.—Various ways of reading the line:—

"The ploughman homeward plods his weary way."

The weary ploughman plods his homeward way. The weary ploughman homeward plods his way. The ploughman, weary, homeward plods his way. The ploughman, weary, homeward plods his way. Weary, the ploughman plods his homeward way. Weary, the ploughman homeward plods his way. Homeward the ploughman plods his weary way. Homeward the ploughman, weary, plods his way. The homeward ploughman, weary, plods his way. The homeward ploughman plods his weary way.

A NEW law has been passed which enables the French powers that be to prosecute natives and aliens for any crimes and offences committed abroad when the said natives and aliens put their foot on shore in France. Under offences in all political writing which may be obnoxious to the powers, so that Englishmen who have done a little in that way will think twice before they put their foot in France now and henceforth, and so closer up the long-expected luxury of a visit in 1867 to see the glories of the Exhibition.

AN INCIDENT OF THE PANIC.—The following curious advertisement appeared in cypher in the second column of the *Times*:—"X19212, 712121111xx, z04, 0, 204111114x, 20B25x, xca7019, 20az, B111-20219 18 19 2z, 2104xx1421 819, x7m, z04, 204111114x, z67z, m04s, H042z 1119zal12, z3219xx, 1881219, XB119." The solution is "Send address to G. Norris. Bank's savage, but arrangement possible. Say to Norris that you won't return unless made safe." The

foregoing is one of the most difficult cyphers to penetrate that has been met with for some time by the gentleman on our staff who is expressly engaged to solve enigmas in advertisements.

MARRIED, NOT MATED.

CHAPTER XV.

SEPTEMBER was with us, and the grass of the orchard was dry and brown; there had not been rain for twelve weeks; the cattle waded in the water, for the shadows were not so thick and cool as they had been a while past; the flies sung drowsily on the window-pane; and other insects made shrill music among the dry leaves; their good time had come.

You might almost see the dust rising up behind the furrow, so dry were the fields, and often the ploughman rested, for it was hard work to cut through the earth.

Fruits were ripe, cider-presses busy, and barns full. We had been at Uncle Peter's since March, and Rosalie had become mistress of the house and of the garden, and fields almost, for she had her way in everything, while I was scarcely more at home than at first: I had not learned to say Uncle Samuel Peter, naturally and easily.

Aunt Sally, who had been all the summer growing better, she said, was so feeble now that she could not sit up all day.

It was nothing; we must not listen to her complaints; she was foolish to make them; especially while Uncle Peter was so much worse than she; if he were only well, she should soon be up again! She would not allow me to bring her wine or fruit, or to fan her, or perform any little office, as though she were sick; all kindnesses must be reserved for Uncle Peter.

She lay on a sofa by an open window, but the air was sultry and seemed not to revive her. She wished she had a little more strength, and could do something for Uncle Peter; she was afraid she would never see him well again.

"Mrs. Throckmorton," said her husband, throwing down the cigar he had been puffing almost in her face, "it appears to me you don't look quite well to-day; you don't stir about enough, my dear. Now, if you would go down stairs and make a pudding, it would strengthen you and elevate your spirits;" and he reached and took from her the fan with which she was endeavouring to keep her poor fainting self alive.

My aunt smiled, as though he had done her a favour, and made an effort to rise, but her strength was not equal to her will, and she sank down again, saying she was ashamed to be so worthless. Uncle Peter made no reply, but seemed to think she ought to be ashamed.

"How thin you are growing," she said to him, as soon as she could speak at all; "let me feel your pulse, my dear;" and she took his great, moist hand in her thin and dry one; if he had had any soul or any heart, and not been the great lump of selfishness he was, he would have perceived how hot and transparent that little hand was, and would have cast himself down in meanness and abjectness before her goodness and purity.

But my aunt, so long as she was not beaten with stripes, and utterly repudiated, was grateful, and fancied she had even more than she deserved.

"Bless my soul!" exclaimed Uncle Peter, looking from the window, "here comes that Rachel Muggins; Mrs. Throckmorton, do oblige me by saying you are not in, for of course she has not presumed to come to see me."

"Of course, not," said Aunt Sally, "but I should not like to send her away when she has come so far through the heat to see me; and you know, Mr. Throckmorton, you received her very kindly when she came to visit you while you were so ill."

"I don't know any such thing," he replied: "she may have been here when I was unconscious of it; and I am surprised that you presume to contradict me."

Aunt Sally was frightened into submission, and not only directed that the woman be informed she was not in, but said to Uncle Peter that no doubt he was too ill, at the time of Mrs. Muggins's former visit, to retain any recollection of it—violating her conscience for the sake of pleasing him.

"It is scarcely credible to believe," said Uncle Peter, continuing, "I suppose what you said was the truth; they have got together there in Mrs. Perrin's old house; it's a mighty snug place, and they have just made it up between them, in short, resolved that they will live together, and so they have got some preachers to say they may, and that I'll just bet you all the world, or Throckmorton Hall, if you are a mind to say so, is the whole amount of it."

"I don't doubt it," said Rosalie, biting her lip.

"Doubt it, no; who could doubt it?" and at this moment his tone changed as his antipathy, despite all refusal of servants, entered the room, and at once

burst forth with the intelligence of the marriage. "Mrs. Muggins," he said, "shall I offer you wine? you look faint." The awful news, in fact, had the effect of warming Uncle Peter's heart towards everybody but the perpetrators of the crime, and so Mrs. Muggins and he drank wine together.

It seemed that they would never have done dwelling on the suspicion that the offending parties had mutually agreed to help one another—in fact, to be married—and that a grave, legally-authorized individual, had actually pronounced them husband and wife.

Aunt Sally tried sincerely to discover what was so outrageous in the transaction, but failed, and concluded her perceptions were growing weak, for that Mr. Throckmorton could be mistaken was not for a moment to be supposed.

"How old do you think the bride is, colonel?" asked Rachel, brightening up under this new patronage.

"Sixty-five, at least."

"Lord bless you! she is more like seventy-five. Why, as long ago as I can remember, she was an old woman; her husband died twenty years ago, aged fifty; and allowing that they were both of one age, and that's most likely, she is seventy now, and I would not wonder if she were seventy-five. She is as smart as a cricket, though, especially at talking."

At this Uncle Peter laughed as much as the grave cattle would admit of, and Mrs. Muggins, thus encouraged, continued:—

"I know something she has said about you."

"Humph!" said Uncle Peter, as though nothing Polly Perrin could do would shock him farther, and Mrs. Muggins proceeded:—

"She's a dreadful gossip, that woman is—there is nothing happens far or near that she hasn't something to say about it; she is full of news; oh, she is a dreadful gossip. She came to see me a good deal when Jackson was a baby, and, I tell you, I got so tired of her gab, I thought sometimes I'd tell her she was meddling with what was none of her business, and I did show her that I thought so, as plain as I could, except by word of mouth; but some folks can't take a hint."

"Humph!" replied Uncle Peter, "well I dare say; and it's a wonder she hadn't talked you to death."

"She would have done so, twenty times," said Rachel, "but that I clapped my hands to my ears when she got to going on too bad."

"I am enabled to state," said Uncle Peter, and his tone and manner indicated that it gave him great satisfaction to be able to make the declaration, "that there was always something in that woman's face that I didn't exactly like. I can't tell what it was, but there was something, invisible as it were."

"I know what you mean," replied Rachel, "it was as if she pretended to be awful good and wasn't so well, I never did like her, to speak the truth—talking as she did about you."

"I thank heaven," said Uncle Peter, "that my reputation can't suffer by anything that woman can say. She can't burn up Throckmorton Hall, and she might just as well be quiet, and not meddle with things that don't concern her."

And he had not, apparently, the remotest idea that that advice was suited to his own condition, as he walked up and down the room, in angry excitement.

"Did she say I was a liar?" he asked, directly.

"No, not exactly," replied Rachel, in a tone which indicated that she had, very nearly said so.

"Did she say I stole?"

"Oh, don't mind what she said," replied Rachel.

"She shall suffer for it," said Uncle Peter; "I'll sue her at law. I'll catch her talking about me."

"Oh, she didn't say anything so very bad," interrupted Rachel, "she said you were not half so sick as you thought yourself, and that Mrs. Throckmorton was worse than you were."

"Humph! that woman is ungrateful." And he called upon my aunt to say whether there was not something about that woman that she didn't exactly like.

Thus urged, Aunt Sally said she never liked the fashion of her cap very well.

"I never liked the fashion of her face," said Rachel; "and her old black dress I couldn't bear—it's about as good now as the first day she wore it, and that was ten years ago."

Aunt Sally tried to raise herself from the sofa, as if thoughts of sickness were dreadful.

"If that woman," said Uncle Peter, "ever pretends to speak of me, again, tell her not to speak of me; that's my wish, that she shall not speak of me."

"I don't like to talk against folks," said Rachel, "but I went there once, and what do you think old Polly was doing?"

Uncle Peter couldn't tell; she might have been coining, for all he knew.

"Well," said Rachel, "she was sifting flour to make bread. Now, anybody that will sift flour to make bread! that's all I want to know about them."

Aunt Sally groaned aloud. Her face was white and her lips trembling. Water was brought; she had yet

strength enough to raise her hand and push the cup towards Uncle Peter, and, waiting for him to drink, her eyes closed, and she became insensible.

We poor frightened children did the best we could, and after a few minutes our dear aunt partially revived, and insisted that she should not be carried to her bed until her husband's return.

He might think her worse than she was, if he should come in and see her there; and so, with some pillows, we made her as comfortable as she thought she ought to be, and waited anxiously for the presence of the fugitives, whose disappearance we could not account for.

At the end of an hour they came, and with them good Mrs. Perrin, or Mrs. Furniss, as we should say, I suppose.

Obedient to the first generous impulse of their hearts, and forgetful of the little spite which, I doubt not, is felt by some persons whenever a marriage takes place, they had visited her, and besought her to come to the Hall.

And days passed; and no rain fell. The clouds looked thin and dry and far away, and fell apart, time after time, and seemed to mingle with the dust that filled all the atmosphere.

The yet green leaves creped and curled up, and the garden flowers blackened, together, like roses in a drawer; the grass withered white; and the hungry cattle sullenly came to the well to drink; for he could see all the bottoms of the brooks parched by the hot sun; the red and green crawfishes lay dead along the pebbly courses of the brooks; and the crows came down and had a feast.

Aunt Sally was still getting better, she said; if it would rain, if it would rain, she should be quite well.

And Mrs. Furniss frequently stayed all day, and all night too. She could stay from home better, now, than she used to, and we were all glad that it was so.

Sometimes, Mr. Furniss himself came, and brought ripe apples and peaches, which Aunt Sally could not eat, but which pleased her, nevertheless, for we are children, to the last, when receiving kindness. She would eat them another time, she always said, smiling; but the time never came.

And, day by day, Uncle Peter brought a button to the bedside to be sewed on, or a torn glove to be mended, telling my aunt, to comfort her, that he was slowly gaining strength, though he had great reason to complain of his appetite, which, indeed, the cook had, also.

Sometimes he would ask her if she felt like riding out with him that day, for he had the sunset and the sunrise to manage, outside of the Hall, and could not have neglected his drives about the neighbourhood, on any account.

She fretted that his obligations were so heavy that he must brave heat and dust; and then, too, though he did not speak of it, it pained him to be from her side.

She wished it would rain, on his account. She didn't feel how much her own dry hands and cheeks needed a moist atmosphere.

"If Mr. Throckmorton could only be with me more," she said; "but he must not neglect his duties, and I must not complain. I am so much weaker than he; he never murmurs, and it is very hard for him."

And all these days, so dreary to me, the cheeks of Rosalie had been blooming more and more. I knew what was the cause of her happiness, though she never spoke of it.

There was nothing to tell; she had told me so once, and I made no further inquiries. I saw little of Doctor Stafford Graham.

His smile was the same, when we met. I felt that it might be sweet to others, but it had lost its power over me.

He seemed very cold—haughty, I thought sometimes. Rosalie said he was not so. Perhaps he was not, to her.

One morning he inquired for Mr. Throckmorton, instead of Rosalie, and, after a brief, and what seemed formal interview, they drank wine together.

Uncle Peter then called Rosalie, and kissed her, and she and her lover walked apart, in the garden. He bent softly towards her, and spoke with tenderness which her gay and independent nature had never seemed to me to demand.

Aunt Sally, and Mrs. Furniss, and all, now talked of Woodside as the future home of Rosalie, and she asked me what the style of her wedding-dress should be, having never said there was to be a wedding, and I tried to smile; for, though she was lost to me, she was not lost to herself.

There was something so beautiful in the perfect happiness of my sister, and in her confidence that it would last always, that we all felt some little portion of her blessedness.

Old Mr. Furniss actually laughed, once or twice; but this might have been accounted for, in part, by

the fact that he had lately almost renewed himself, in his happiness.

The garden gave him employment. Even Aunt Sally revived, somewhat: her own blest wedding-day was so forcibly brought to her mind.

"You will be well enough to witness the marriage," said Uncle Peter.

He would not listen to a perhaps; it must be so. And, having laid his hand on a dry pine table, he received an impression that Mrs. Throckmorton's little indisposition was solely owing to a deficiency of will.

If she would exert a little will, she would get up at once. "In fact, she was up; she didn't know it, that was all.

From that day, she blamed herself more for being ill than she had previously done; all the power, all the will she had, she exerted, to appear better than she was; she would get up and sew a little, when Uncle Peter came into the room, though the needle often fell from her fingers, and her eyes grew blind.

"Have me a new cap made," she said to Mrs. Furniss, one day, "and let it be just like yours; just that style, Mrs. Furniss, be very particular about that."

I understood that this was designed as a sort of atonement to our neighbour for Aunt Sally's having said she didn't like the fashion of her caps.

The old wedding-dress was laid on the grass to bleach—the grass, still brown and dry, for there had been no rain—and, under the supervision of Mrs. Furniss and Uncle Peter, the preparations for the wedding went forward.

Every day my aunt said she was better. She could only make a pretence of work now, but she kept her basket by her, that my uncle might think she was sometimes busy.

"How is the will to-day, Mrs. Throckmorton?" he would ask, and she, with difficulty repressing her cough, would answer, "Thank you, Mr. Throckmorton; I am better—I shall be dressed by Wednesday."

This was the day appointed for Rosalie's marriage.

Now and then Mrs. Furniss, who had grown young and active since that notable exhibition of her ingratitudo towards the master of the Hall, would steal away to Woodside, to inquire of the health of Mr. Henry Graham, about which she felt an instinctive alarm; and sometimes, when she met his brother, the doctor, would question him very closely on the subject; but he could not perceive the least occasion for uneasiness, he said:

"Henry has no disease; he seems to be depressed, indifferent to everything, that is all; if he would summon back a little courage, he would be well enough in a fortnight."

But the good woman had been the nurse of the neighbourhood too long, and too observant of mortal maladies, to be very sanguine even when she heard that Henry Graham was again with Nellie, out in the woods.

Wednesday came, and was almost over. The sun had set, but dew fell on the parched and withered grass, and the stars winked sultrily through the dusty haze.

My aunt's white dress, scented with roses, was brought into her room, and she said she was well enough to have it put on.

She sat feebly, half-reclining, on the sofa, leaning her burning cheek upon her thin, pale hand, and as we adjusted some few flowers in her cap, she said, over and over, "Oh, if it would rain! everything is so dry!"

Rosalie looked very beautiful. A day in the city, with my uncle, had enabled her to select a costume for the occasion that illustrated the perfection of her taste, which, in everything connected with personal appearance, was intuitively correct.

There was some sadness in all our hearts for Aunt Sally's illness, but my sister was nevertheless filled with that still and almost divine happiness, which, in the last hours before a longed-for bridal, if ever in human life, has dominion over us.

I saw her when, her toilet complete, she came into my aunt's room, and kissed her, with tears and smiles struggling for dominion over her sweet face.

There was a noise and a cloud of dust at the gate. I held her hand a moment tight in mine; I could not let her go; but she said, tremblingly,

"He has come!"

There was one whose claim was greater than mine. I felt, and let her go, and the next moment her blushes were hid in the bridegroom's bosom.

With a smile that said the pride and power of manhood were strong beneath it, he looked down upon her, and put his arm about her waist, and between her and me.

The guests came in, and were greeted by Uncle Peter with his customary phrase, and more than his customary self-importance; the minister came, and gossiped of the last ten years' marriages in the neigh-

bourhood; and at length the solemn service was said, and, "forsaking all others," my sister was the wife of Stafford Graham.

There were lights, and flowers, and guests in the parlour, and Aunt Sally sat upright on the sofa, in her apartment, lamps burning about her, and making the atmosphere hotter and drier than before, waiting for Uncle Peter to help her.

She could not walk without him, and had asked for him till she was weary, and now sat quite still.

"My dear Mrs. Throckmorton," he said, at last, appearing at the door.

For the first time she did not answer him. He had not come to help her as she had desired, and she was gone alone. Gone where her thirst was satisfied in the full fountain of love.

When all the melancholy rites were done, and all the incentives to display over, he must have felt some compunctions visiting; but the world about him never had reason to suspect, from his demeanour, that he did not doubt whether she were a gainer in being removed to Paradise from Throckmorton Hall.

I was at Woodside, whither I had been preceded by my sister and her husband.

It was the morning of the Sabbath, and the leaves rattled, for there was a little wind stirring now, and one black, heavy cloud, was low in the west.

As the day went by, the wind strengthened, and occasional gusts swept through the grounds, wailing and hurried, and the cloud rose and widened until it covered half the sky.

Little Nellie, looking weary, but patient and meek, carried the baby from room to room—now where the elder Mrs. Graham sat, in the midst of her incongruous accumulations, growing discontent as the children approached; and now where the mother, pale and cold as a marble statue, sat quietly in moody and hopeless reveries.

With a wave of the hand she would repel their approach, and, then, with a flushed countenance, that betrayed her sensitive nature, Nellie would softly close the door, lest her mother should be disturbed, and slowly climb the stairs to the highest room in the house, where she was sure of a welcome, for there lay her sick father, the weaknesses of whose nature, whatever they were, all leaned to the side of virtue, and invested his affection for his children with even a touching tenderness.

There poor Nellie was called a dear good child, and a holiday dress promised her. No wonder she went up to the lonesome garret; but the baby, puny and weak, grew fretful there, and her visits were short ones.

The day passed along till near the evening, and there was still no rain. I had been about the garden till I was tired.

It was a beautiful place, to be sure, for Henry had watered the flowers, and kept them fresh through all the drought.

At the foot of a shady slope I had been sitting, for there was a pool of water, with lilies undulating on its surface.

Over the margin of its stony basin it flowed away, and the grass was green wherewithal went. Towards night I gathered some flowers that grew there, fragrant and dewy, and seeing Nellie ascend the stairs as I entered the house, put them in her hand, a present for her father.

"Come with me," she said, smiling, and I followed the long, dusty way.

It was in a most cheerless-looking attic that he lay, colourless and thin. The sunshine had poured all day on the roof.

A pile of curious shells and stones, some stuffed birds, abused books, and a broken violin, were in one corner.

They had been there, he said, since he moved up-stairs, though how long that had been, or for what purpose he had moved up-stairs, I could not guess.

The last winter's blankets and coverlets, and sheets, too, apparently, were spread over the bed, and the one pillow was too small.

He turned towards us, his blue and sunken eyes twinkling with something like pleasure. There was not much that I could do just then.

Joe, at my request, brought water, and while I bathed the neglected patient's face and hands, she sprinkled the floor, and at the sunset he said he was better.

I sat down by the bedside; the baby was placed near him, and with his hand on its head he listened, while I expressed the regrets felt that he had been unable to attend the marriage of Rosalie, and my anticipations of happiness in residing with her at Woodside, and told something of the plans we had already thought of for rendering the house itself as cheerful as his taste and industry had made all the grounds around it.

His eyes brightened, and a new interest beamed in them. Everything had been neglected, he said, since he was ill; but I assured him the flowers were as fresh

about the fountain as if his training hand had been over them that very hour. The enthusiasm of his nature was awakened, and Nellie could not help saying:

"Oh, father, how much better you are!"

He smiled upon her, and said, "Go, my dear, and see if your mother will not come and see me a few moments, and tell her our new sister is here."

The answer with which the child soon returned, that the mother did not feel like coming, brought back the air of melancholy depression from which he had been aroused, but after a moment he said, abruptly, "I wish Stafford would come up," and Nellie flew to find him.

Her uncle was drinking tea with Aunt Rosalie; he would come presently; and the promise was a new inspiration.

But we waited a long time; waited an hour; and Doctor Graham did not come; and, then, softened as a tender-hearted boy might be by an unkind surprise, his eyes filled with tears, until, partially recalling the little energy of his nature, he remarked to me.

"You are so nearly one of us now, and your relation to the family seems so natural and settled, that I may tell you why I was anxious to see Stafford. He will not trouble himself to come up to this gloomy place to-night, and I have a presentiment that when he does come, it will be too late for all I should have it in my heart to say, if he were here. We have held this property of Woodside together. We have not agreed, nor yet agreed to disagree. I have worked hard, but have not fared so well as he. All has been wrong, in some way, and I have been thinking we might arrange it for our mutual benefit. I want to give him all that he can ask; submit my will in everything to his; and, by removing causes of distrust, see if he cannot be won to a more fraternal regard for me—see if we cannot really be brothers. His marriage furnishes a suitable occasion for such a settlement of our business. He would not, I think, be ungenerous; for myself, I shall have little use for anything any more; but the claims of these dear children, and—and all the claims that can exist through me, I would, today, submit unreservedly to his decision—and compel him to feel, while I remain in the world, some affection for me. You see, however, that he has forgotten me."

"He has just gone into a new world, you know," I said, "so it is no wonder he forgets the old; but I will find him;" and I descended in search of Stafford.

"A new world," I heard him say; "who can tell what such worlds may be!"

I went from room to room, searching for the brother, but he was nowhere to be found, and extended my inquisition to the garden, and up and down the various walks, and into the beautiful arbour, where the harvest flowers still were fair, despite the weeks of dry heat, which had made deserts of the open fields.

It was true that Henry feared; he had been quite forgotten; but Stafford would go now, with Rosalie, and he inquired if I proposed returning again to see the attic philosopher.

I wanted only to gather a fresh bouquet, and as I did so, a slight sound, like a distant footstep, arrested my attention, and looking down the slope, I thought I saw a human figure moving along. The cloud was rapidly coming up the sky, and the wind blowing.

It was, in part, the noise of the dry leaves, and the rest fancy, I concluded, and, with my flowers, returned to the house. Up and up we went, to the garret, and as I opened the door, the wind blew out my lamp.

"Well, Henry," said Stafford, going close to the bed, "you must forgive me," and he reached out his hand, but none was extended to meet it. "Get a light," he said, passing his hand hurriedly and alarmedly along the bed.

The light was brought, and there lay the baby fast asleep, and there sat little Nellie, her head on the bedside, and fast asleep too.

"Father is better," she had said, and had yielded to nature's sweet restorer, with an unwonted look of pleasure beaming all over her face.

Stafford bent, with the lamp in his hand, over the uncomfortable bed, and then moved, with an expression of anxiety, touched with remorse, along the garret, saying, "It is not strange that he is ill; these things must be changed;" and to his accusing conscience, "I never dreamed he was so badly cared for."

And Rosalie said, "Oh, we have been so happy, and your brother here! It shall not hereafter be so. We have been selfish in our joy: come, I will find him," and, directed by her heart, she went to the parlour of Annette.

"He has not been here; pray don't disturb me," was all the answer here given to her inquiries, and thence she proceeded from room to room; and all this time there had been an awful fear upon my heart, that I dared not speak; but when I saw the face of Stafford

grew white, I said, I thought, as I gathered the flowers, I had seen some one in the garden.

The cloud had spread all over the sky now, and the slow rain was falling. With lanterns we went out, all together. No one spoke, but, by one instinct, we sought the pool at the foot of the grounds.

The water was shallow, scarce two feet deep, so that when our lights were lowered to its surface, we could see all it contained.

The knowledge I had of the poor man's temper and melancholy life had brought a fear that forbade surprise.

In the last struggle he had reached one hand up through the tiles, as though there was something in the world to take hold of yet.

When, afterwards, I told Stafford of the generous purposes for which Henry would have seen him that fatal night, his heart was softened, and he even shed tears.

The days brightened ere long, and gaiety came to Woodside, with the hope of prosperous years. I cannot yet read clearly the destinies of Stafford and Rosalie, but the signs are propitious, and if they are not mated as well as married, why it is fortunate that neither is so constituted as to die of a broken heart.

Mrs. Annette Graham is slowly recovering, and proposes making a long journey, in company with her mother-in-law, for the complete restoration of her health, and the dissipation of her grief.

Whether that venerable dame will leave in, however, somewhat doubtful; but Woodside is less agreeable to her than formerly; she feels that her dominion there is broken for ever; and Rosalie indulges the pleasant dream, not only of her undertaking the journey with Annette, but that she may make up her mind to pass the remainder of her life with a dear, distant relative, of whom she talks a great deal.

Mrs. Farnese spreads her table for two, and finds pleasure in the addition to her housekeeping care. Her husband rents advantageously his property in town, makes the cottage his home, and declares that seeing to the garden is just what is necessary for his health.

Rachel says she shall not rest till grandmam and Annette have "cleared out," nor then, unless she believes "that'll be the last we shall hear of 'em," and when she sees the handsome monument which has already been placed above the remains of Henry, she confesses her belief that "Jordan is a hard road to travel."

The last time I saw Uncle Peter, he had his hand on a pine table, in the hope of receiving "a communication" from poor Aunt Sally, whose shade he entreated more tenderly than I ever knew her living self to be.

He had just received, he told me, an "impression," through the dear deceased, that Gabriel would thenceforth abide at Throckmorton Hall, and that he himself should become his "medium."

So my characters are all disposed of, as well, perhaps, as their respective qualities, and the average chances of the world, admitted, and yet how different their histories might have been, if all parties had been Mated, as well as Married!

THE END.

THIRSTANE.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE winter was passing, and with Rachel's stronger love of art the difficulties under which she pursued her studies daily increased.

Mr. Ward everywhere expressed his dissatisfaction at the manner in which she wasted her time, and became so severe a critic that she really dreaded to have him look at anything she did.

The fact that he knew nothing at all about art did not in the slightest degree check his criticisms. He had visited most of the English galleries and looked at the roof of the Louvre; so of course, in his own mind, there could remain no doubt of his capability to decide upon the merits of any picture or artist that came within his notice.

Rachel was busy upon the most important landscape she had yet attempted, and Mr. Cross, as well as her other friends, urged her to send it to the spring exhibition of the Academy.

She thought so little about it that she had not mentioned the subject to Mr. Ward, although, if she had reflected seriously upon the matter, she would have supposed that he could not consider it within his province to interfere, farther at least than to express his usual general disapprobation of her wishes and proceedings.

One night they were at Mr. Sherwin's house, with no one present except the few who formed Rachel's intimate circle.

It had required considerable management on Alice's part to secure them, for Mr. Ward had begun to de-

vote petty excuses to prevent her visiting frequently the persons whom she really liked, and was almost certain to owe a call in some other direction upon the very night she was invited by any one of the number.

But for that occasion Alice had employed all the diplomatic talent she possessed, and by every delicate attention to Mr. Ward during a week in advance, had been honoured with his gracious acceptance of her invitation.

She had been the more anxious as her uncle was to leave town the next day for an absence of a week or more, and expressed a desire to have the little circle united again before his departure.

Unfortunately the subject of the picture came up, mingled with such praises of Rachel's talent as were by no means calculated to increase her husband's good-humour.

"Have you decided to exhibit it, Mrs. Ward?" inquired Mr. Seaman.

"I have scarcely thought about the matter?" she replied.

"You cannot be so unjust to yourself as not to send it," Leonard added.

"I shall carry it up in my own hands if she refuses," said Mrs. Meredith, laughingly; "the picture must be exhibited."

"The flat has gone forth!" said Mr. Seaman.

"There is no retreat now, Mrs. Ward; you must submit quietly to your fate."

"May I ask of what you are speaking?" inquired Mr. Ward from the sofa, where he had been boring Miss Stanton for half an hour, doing her the honour to consider her almost the only person in the room worthy to be enlightened by his conversation—a distinction which she could willingly have spared, only her rigid ideas of courtesy forbade it and forced her to listen conscientiously. "May I ask, Mrs. Ward, of what picture you are speaking?"

"Of that little landscape I am at work on," Rachel replied, with a sudden sinking of the heart, for the very tone of his voice warned her that she might expect something unpleasant.

"Oh, that slight effort," he returned, with an attempt at sarcasm which came into the world a ruderness; "what of it, please?"

"We are urging her to send it to the exhibition," Leonard said, feeling, as he often did, a strong desire to push the worthy gentleman out of the room. "I hope you will add your solicitations to ours."

"Indeed he must," said Mrs. Meredith; "please remember, Mr. Ward."

"What did I understand you thought of doing with it, Mrs. Ward?" he asked, turning towards her with his most solemn manner.

"I really have not thought about it," she replied; "Mr. Seaman and Mrs. Meredith are anxious to have me send it to the exhibition."

"You may add Mr. Ward to the number of those who are anxious; may she not?" continued Mrs. Meredith, playfully.

"It is no habit of mine, madam, to make up my mind without due reflection," he answered. "At present, my own feeling is one of surprise at hearing a subject like that discussed by Mrs. Ward's acquaintances, of which I was wholly ignorant."

Everybody looked a little startled, as even well-bred people must at a speech like that. Rachel felt her face crimson, then grow pale, but they were all gazing at Mr. Ward, not at her.

"We are only trying our powers of persuasion," Mrs. Meredith said, in her sweetest voice; "of course, when it came to receiving counsel and deciding the thing, it would be from you that she would seek advice."

"I believe," he said, as disagreeably as possible, "that the veto power must always remain in the hands of the husband."

"We shall have ample time to discuss the whole matter," Rachel said, with cold dignity; "my own mind is by no means made up."

"The picture will certainly be a triumph for a young artist," Leonard said.

"Sir," returned Mr. Ward, "my wife is not an artist; she paints as an accomplishment—neither her own tastes nor her husband's position would permit anything farther."

The look Thirstane gave him was as exasperating as Mr. Ward's remark had been insulting.

"There is no denying the genius," he said, "confine it under what name you will."

"You ought to see the galleries abroad, Mrs. Ward," Mr. Seaman remarked, by way of changing the conversation.

"I have seen them," returned Mr. Ward, before she could speak; "and I know what pictures are—when Mrs. Ward has done so, she will be less anxious to display her crude efforts."

There was no reply possible—the man was her husband—rudeness to him would be an insult to her—Leonard's great eyes and Mrs. Meredith's expressive

mouth each had a language by no means agreeable, if the offender understood it.

"Now we will leave Mrs. Ward," Rachel said, laughing pleasantly enough, although she trembled all over with indignation; "I do not find her at all interesting. Mrs. Meredith, you promised me a song an hour ago."

"And you shall have it, as I am a conscientious woman and do not like to be burthened with unfulfilled pledges."

She went to the piano, and her beautiful, tutored voice put an end to the discussion which had threatened, on Mr. Ward's part at least, to end in an exceedingly unpleasant scene.

Mr. Sherwin and Alice had been engaged in another room, and only entered as the conversation ceased, but the former understood at once that something unpleasant had occurred, and seated himself by Rachel's side, conversing with her during the pauses in the music.

Miss Stanton and Mr. Seaman had gone to the piano, Mr. Ward took possession of Alice, who had the ill luck to be something of a favourite with him, and Leonard sat alternately watching Rachel and her husband, with a whirl of thought in his mind so varied and perplexed that he could pass no judgment upon his feelings.

"You know I leave town in the morning," Mr. Sherwin said to Rachel.

"Yes, Alice told me; I am very sorry."

"I am sorry to go, very sorry."

"You will return soon?"

"In the course of a week or two at the longest," he replied, "I have a strong feeling about this journey."

"No presentiment of ill luck, I hope."

"Not that; indeed I have few superstitions. It seems to me as if I should find everything changed on my return."

"Nothing ever does change," Rachel said, sadly; "it is the same round of miserable trials under different names and aspects."

"You are gloomy to-night," he replied, looking at her with the wistful tenderness in his eyes which was so often visible when he regarded her. "You do not look well, I think—is your head aching?"

"No; indeed, I am well enough. I have been expecting a letter from my Aunt Margaret for several weeks, and none has come yet."

He grew troubled, as he always did at the mention of that name, but he pursued the subject, great as was the pain it caused him; a pain of which Rachel had little conception, for he was not a man to cower under any mental torture, but would rather have forced it upon himself, and subdued his soul into patience during the struggle.

"Is she a poor correspondent?" he asked.

"Very; I have not had more than three or four letters from her during the winter."

"She is not ill?"

"No, I should have heard of it—the girl who has been with her for many years would have written me."

"Surely, yes," he said absently, "she would have written."

"Aunt Margaret never used to be unwell," continued Rachel, "but I do not think she is so strong now."

He turned hastily towards her.

"What do you mean? Is she sick—have you—?"

"Not sick; but I think less strong; I notice that her writing does not look so firm as formerly, and Ophelia wrote me that she often lay down during the day, once an unheard-of thing for Aunt Margaret."

"She is ill, and is too proud for complaint," he said; "you ought to write and urge her to have advice."

"It would be useless, Mr. Sherwin; you cannot persuade her."

"True," he answered, "true—no one can do that."

"She must have suffered greatly some time; while we lived together I was too young and ignorant to comprehend why she was so different from every one else, but now I know that only suffering can freeze a person into the coldness she always exhibited."

"She is frozen," he muttered; "her very heart is ice."

Rachel did not catch the words—she was thinking of her aunt—wondering if she should ever grow like her.

Once it had appeared impossible, but now it seemed to her an easy thing to freeze slowly into that stillness from under which no warm feelings, no hopes, no desires, ever escaped.

"I wonder what made her so," she said, aloud, but half to her own thoughts.

"What do you say?" Mr. Sherwin asked.

"I was thinking of my aunt, wondering what caused her to let her so cold and hard."

Mr. Sherwin did not answer for several moments, and at length he said:

"Gulliver need not do that—it should make us better and nobler."

"It would not have that effect upon me," Rachel replied.

"I think you misjudge your own character; you do yourself a wrong."

"No; I believe that after a time I should grow cold, hard, icy. I might bear for years—I would neither quarrel nor complain—but I should freeze slowly, and no sun could ever thaw my heart again."

"What would do that?" he asked.

"Petty trials, ceaseless and unvarying—constant thwarting of my wishes and desires—they would either drive me mad or chill my heart utterly."

"Child, child!" he said, earnestly. "Learn to bear with patience—life is short at the best."

"I have not complained," she returned, proudly. "I was thinking of my aunt, and wondering what would make me like her."

"Pray to heaven," he said, "that nothing may ever make you so unforgiving."

"Is she unforgiving?" Rachel asked. "Yes, I am sure she would be! I know when I was a child she never scolded me, but if I offended her she would treat me for days with such indifference that my poor little heart almost broke. 'Beat me,' I used to say, 'don't beat me, Aunt Margaret, but don't look at me in that way.'"

John Sherwin's hand was pressed close against his mouth; he could not trust himself to speak.

"It is you who are pale," Rachel said; "have I grieved you, sir?"

"No, child; no; you never do that. You were telling me of Margaret, of your aunt—go on."

"Indeed I know little of her; I never felt that we were in the least acquainted."

"Were you lonely there?" he asked.

"Very lonely; but I was so young then! Oh, how different it would seem—the quiet that was so irksome would be pleasant to me. I could read, paint, ramble among the mountains—it would be paradise now."

She spoke with unconscious vehemence; her flushed cheeks and glittering eyes betrayed her strong mental agitation.

That good man's heart seemed breaking as he looked in her face and felt how powerless he was, how utterly without strength even to comfort her.

"You will go there next summer, I suppose," he said, trying to bring the conversation back to indifferent subjects, since to dwell upon those things was only useless pain to both.

"I am unable to say; I have not heard Mr. Ward mention it."

She did not speak the words with any attempt at martyrdom, simply she had been so long controlled that she had ceased to try thinking for herself in any matter like that.

Before Mr. Sherwin could speak again, Mrs. Meredith and Leonard came towards them, and as the former chanced to have passed into one of her merry humours, anything like rational conversation was quite out of the question.

Alice and Mr. Ward joined them very soon, and even he was made to smile by their laughing merriment.

"I have an idea," Mrs. Meredith whispered, suddenly, "look at that darling old maid and bachelor."

Miss Stanton and Mr. Seaman had remained by the piano, and were busily talking and turning over the music.

"Would it not be nice?" she asked, mischievously. "No," said Alice, "for I should lose Stanny—it is very bad of you, Susan, even to think of such a thing."

"You selfish little rose-bud! But, seriously, they would make a precious couple; he is quite well off now."

"Your match-making powers would be wasted there," Leonard said; "quite thrown away."

Mr. Meredith professed great indignation, and took Rachel to see a new picture in the boudoir; Leonard followed them, and the three stayed there for some time, chatting pleasantly.

All the while, Mr. Ward sat grimly observant, his eyes fixed upon the entrance to the room.

Alice was talking to her uncle, but she looked nearly as jealous and miserable as Mr. Ward himself.

Indeed, she had allowed many bitter, wrong feelings to grow up in her bosom during the past weeks, and they were stinging her heart now with their venom.

Mr. Sherwin was thinking only of Rachel, pitying and wearying over her.

"She looks pale and ill," he said, suddenly.

"Who?" Alice asked.

"Rachel—Mrs. Ward—you call her Rachel, do you not?"

"Always Rachel!" thought Alice. "Why should she be first with every one? Now even my uncle is going to love her better than me."

She checked the unworthy thought, remembering how much there was in Rachel's life to make her miserable and discontented.

Indeed, she worked herself into quite a fever of remorse, so that when she found herself near her friend again she was ready to beg her pardon—for what she would have been puzzled to say—her jealous thoughts were too undefined for explanation.

But Leonard she treated with a haughty coldness very unusual with her, and which irritated him exceedingly, in so much that before he left the house they were quite near a quarrel, and Alice had the whole night to make herself miserable in consequence.

CHAPTER XXII.

In the meantime, in Margaret Holmes's orderly household, the weeks passed with the utmost regularity.

As Rachel had said, she heard from her but seldom, for the woman was not given to letter-writing, and such epistles as she did send were models of conciseness and brevity.

Ophelia Hill wrote one, a marvellous production of four pages of blue paper, and a perfect mystery to one unacquainted with the peculiarities of her style, which consisted in the singular arrangement of the sentences, and a manner so original of spelling even the most simple words, that it showed positive genius to have been able to twist the commonplaces little things into such wonderful shapes.

The winter had almost gone, and although the snows had not yet entirely cleared, there were evidences that spring did not intend much longer to delay her approach.

Notwithstanding so many months had elapsed, Ophelia had by no means ceased to think and talk of Miss Holmes's journey; indeed, there is every probability that it would have afforded her a topic of wonderment for at least a year longer, had not a newer event, of the same character, diverted her attention from the old subject.

One evening, while Ophelia was occupied with her sowing in the kitchen, Margaret entered the room, and said, in her usual way:

"Ophelia, you will have to get on by yourself for a few days; I am going away."

Ophelia dropped her work, and stared at the speaker with both hands extended.

"You are what?" she asked.

"I am going away from home for a short time."

Miss Hill was thoroughly convinced that the woman had taken leave of her senses, and was so overcome with wonder and surprise, that she really lacked power to articulate a syllable. But Margaret paid no attention to her distress, moving about the kitchen, pushing a chair in place, or arranging a table, with her usual busy restlessness.

"You're agoin' away agin!" ejaculated Ophelia, at length. "Well, if this don't beat all nature. Either you're crazy, or else I do, one of 'other."

"I never thought you lacked much of it," replied Margaret, smiling coolly, taking a broom, and brushing up a few ashes that had fallen from the grate.

"Well, I guess, if there ain't no strait jackets bonght in the valley only what I wear, there won't be much money spent on 'em," retorted Miss Hill, picking up her work, and giving herself one of her irritated shakes.

"Reuben must draw another load of coal," pursued Margaret, without noticing her words, "and he may as well busy himself putting new hoops on those buckets in the granary. I want to turn the trees on the island to some account this year."

"Be you goin' to see Rachel?" demanded Ophelia, sternly, having settled in her own mind that she was not to be put down in that way.

"Don't leave the house alone at night," continued Miss Holmes.

"Law me!" the damsel burst out. "I guess I shan't let the house run off! I asked you if you was goin' to see Rachel—did you say you was?"

"I did not say so."

"I s'pose you'll be back afore long?"

"Without doubt."

Ophelia turned her work over in her lap, and the questions in her mind, to see in what other way they could be put that would be more likely to prove successful.

"If Squire Woodson, or the minister, or anybody comes to ask where you're gone, what'll I say?"

"None of them are at all likely to come."

"But they mought, moughtn't they—and if they should what would I tell them?"

Margaret turned, and gave her one of the peculiar glances which always had the effect of silencing Miss Hill.

"Tell them," said she, "that I did not see fit to inform you where I was going, and you did not take the liberty to inquire."

Ophelia sank back in her chair, aghast and confounded, and Margaret left the kitchen without another word. At length, the damsel crammed her work into its basket, and made preparations to retire.

Just then Margaret Holmes half opened the sitting-room door, and called—

"Reuben."

"Yes'm!"

"I want you to have the horses ready to take me to the station immediately after breakfast."

"All right."

The breakfast hour in winter always came before daylight in Margaret Holmes's house, so there was no necessity for any unusual exertion the next morning.

The lady came out to the table arrayed in her travelling dress, and carrying her carpet-bag in her hand.

"You're all ready," Ophelia said, patronizingly. "I've got a cup of good strong coffee; it's the very thing to travel on."

Miss Hill did not speak from actual experience, for a ride to the country town some ten miles off was probably the longest journey she had ever taken in her life; but her theoretical knowledge upon all subjects was immense.

She made herself as officious and good-natured as possible, putting a nice luncheon into the carpet-bag, and warming Margaret's cloak before the fire, naturally hoping that, as a reward for those delicate attentions, she should receive some information concerning the journey.

Reuben came to the door with the horses, and announced his readiness. Ophelia bundled Margaret in everything she could lay hands on, asked a thousand questions, looked imploredly, but all in vain—not a word concerning the departure.

"Good bye, Ophelia," she said; "I shall be back very soon."

"What day'll I expect you?"

"Not till I come."

She stepped close to Margaret, arranged her cloak carefully in the neck, and whispered—

"Now, where you be goin', Miss Holmes?"

"To the end my journey, Ophelia," replied the impractical woman, and left the house before the girl was sufficiently recovered to speak again.

It would require a volume to express the varied feelings of Ophelia during that day, which had not as many moments as her rapid mind had conjectures concerning Margaret's departure.

Before Miss Holmes's return, however, her attention was diverted for a space by the proceedings of Reuben Brainard, which certainly were peculiar and astonishing enough in a staid bachelor of his years.

The truth was, Reuben had conceived a strong liking for the energetic damsel, although at the same time he stood a little in awe of her.

Perhaps the very contrast between her active habits and his somewhat indolent nature was what first attracted him towards her.

Reuben was certainly not handsome; he was past forty-five, and had lost two of his front teeth; he was short, rather thick-set, and turned his toes in when he walked—altogether presenting a totally different appearance from Ophelia, who planted her feet on the ground like a grenadier, was tall, scraggy and made up of angles.

But in accordance with the law of attraction for opposites, Reuben, in spite of his mature years and timidity, had determined to lay siege to the fortress of her heart.

They were seated one evening by the kitchen fire, Ophelia knitting with great diligence, and Reuben occupied in putting a new hinge upon a small chest of the damsel's which she greatly prized, and wherein she was accustomed to keep many little valuables.

Ophelia had hardly been as talkative as usual, and Reuben was a taciturn man; but that night his heart and head were full of the resolve he had been so many years in arriving at.

"It looks as good as new," he said, as he completed his work and placed the chest on the stand beside her.

Ophelia tried the lid several times, scrutinizing the hinge, and answered, condescendingly:

"It'll do, Reuben, it'll do; I allus say there's some things men folks can perpetrate."

"It's as cuddy here as a body could wish," he said, bashfully; "you must allow, Ophely, that I can build a fire with anybody."

Ophelia bridled with maidenly modesty at the beginning of the sentence, but nodded a gracious assent to the closing proposition.

"I s'pose you don't know when Miss Holmes'll be along," he said, after another pause.

"Now, don't ask me, unless you want to get me riled up," she returned, with such energy that the poor man dropped the subject as if it had been a fire-cracker just ready to explode.

"No, no!" he exclaimed. "She must get kind o' lonesome here," he added, with apparent meekness, but



OPHELIA RECEIVES AN OFFER OF MARRIAGE.

still with a view of pushing the conversation towards the subject that occupied his thoughts.

"Lonesome?" Why, I'm here, ain't I?"

"Dear me, yes, and you'd be better company than two houses full like some folks, but still, you know—"

"No, I don't know either," interrupted Ophelia, with that sudden sharpness which always disconcerted Reuben; "what do I know?"

"Wal, a body'd think she would ha' got married—"

"Oh my!" she broke in again, with a short, derisive laugh. "I wish you'd tell her so, that's all."

"I don't want to tell her," he replied, with much earnestness; "but it seems queer that she never could suit herself."

"She has," retorted Ophelia; "it suits her to live alone, like a sensible woman! Wouldn't she be foolish to turn herself into a slave and bondswoman for any man?"

"There's something in that, mabby," he replied, anxious to agree with her, if possible; "but then it's natural for a woman to like somebody to look arter, you know."

"Wal, pigs and chickens is enough sight easier to take care on than men, and more rational, too," said Ophelia.

"But it's very delightsome to have little children running about the house," he suggested, in a faint voice, half choked by titter.

"Reuben!" exclaimed Ophelia, in a tone that made him start, and strangled his merriment into a doleful squeak. "Just remember I'm here a lone and unprotected female, and don't you go to bein' undelicate."

"Goodness me, I didn't think of such a thing," he stammered; "don't take a body up so, Ophelia."

"The squire'll do that for any man that insults me; he's my first cousin's husband," she replied, grimly; "so you see I've got the law of the land quite handy."

"Why, I didn't mean a thing—"

"That's enough! If you didn't you didn't—least said soonest mended."

It was several moments before Reuben recovered his equanimity after that unexpected explosion; but like any timid man, when he had once got his courage up, he was fairly desperate.

"Did you know I owned a lot?" he asked.

"Taint Lot's wife, is it?" she returned, scornfully.

"No; it's a good ten acre lot, and there's a purty place for a house, and the way garden sauce grows there is tremendous."

"Whereabouts is it?" Ophelia asked, condescending to display a slight interest.

"Only six miles back of the valley—it's as barnsome a situation as anybody could wish."

"Why on earth don't you live on it and take care of it, then?"

"It's lonesome all by myself," he said, twirling his thumbs and glancing at her from under his shaggy eyebrows; but Ophelia sat unblushing, upright as the poker, knitting violently, with her feet stretched out upon the hearth, the toes of her shoes turned straight up, independent and strong-minded, as usual.

"Men folks is poor hands to get on alone," she said. "Got a house on it?"

"Well, tain't to say much of a house, Ophely; tain't my way to cheat nobody," he replied, briskly, really hoping that she had at length begun to comprehend his drift. "There's only two rooms and a lot, but a body could easy put a condition back."

"Yes, that would do for a kitchen—"

"So it would! I ain't no more empty-pocketed than other folks, either," he continued, confidentially. "I ain't oblieged to do chores, you know; but I thought this was a comfortable place for the winter, things easy, and company agreeable," Reuben said. "Miss Holmes is just the woman to do anything for a person she liked; she must be worth a lot, Ophely."

"I suppose she is; I won't do you nor me much good, I guess."

"Mabby it might, if she thought—"

"Wal, I declare, what be you drivin' at, Reuben Brainard—you don't want to marry her, do you?"

"Oh, no," and he giggled and twisted his poor thumbs more mercilessly than before. "Drot her—I don't want to marry her," putting such an emphasis on the pronoun, that for the first time Ophelia looked at him in astonishment.

"I mean," he continued, hitching his chair closer to hers, and turning away his head, "that she'd be apt to do the purty by you if you was to think of marryin'—"

"I ain't a thinkin' of it, Reuben," she replied, in a voice, so unusually mild that, to a wiser person than her companion, the tone would have portended mischief.

"But you mought, you know! I'll tell you what, Ophely, I'll clear up my farm and build a big house, and fix everything up prime if you'll come there and live," he said, speaking in great haste, lest his courage should fail before the sentence was finished.

"I ain't in the habit of livin' where there ain't no wimmen folks," she replied, with the same portentous calmness.

"Dear me," he stammered; "I want you to marry me, Ophely."

He dropped his face into his shirt bosom, quite overcome by his own boldness; Ophelia gave one pull at her knitting that disarranged numberless stitches, and sent two of the needles half way across the room—then she exclaimed, in angry surprise:

"Wal, there, you have gone and made a purty fool of yourself, Reuben Brainard—you've spoke out if you never did afore—yes, you've spoilt now and better go up head! What a tormented snoop you must be to think—"

"Won't you do it, Ophely?" he pleaded, faintly.

"Do it!" she echoed, rising in great wrath. "Do you think I'd be a waiter and bondswoman for you? Why, you're lame with the rheumatis now. I'm ashamed of you, Reuben; I do, indeed."

He shrank farther into his chair, but found no response to her irate words.

"Get off to bed," she repeated, "as fast as you can travel, and if I hear any more such stuff I'll set Miss Holmes at you."

Reuben retreated without waiting to light his candle, and Ophelia did not cease her exclamations until he had closed the door.

Just as she was settling herself again, he pushed the door a little ajar, and called, in a plaintive whisper—

"Ophely, you needn't say nothin', you know; tain't no use pokin' fun at a feilair."

"I ain't likely to say nothing," retorted she; "you hasn't done me no sich great harm that I'd wish to talk about it."

The door closed again, and Reuben took himself and his troubles away through the dark to his cold chamber, left to soothe his vanity and wounded feelings as best he might.

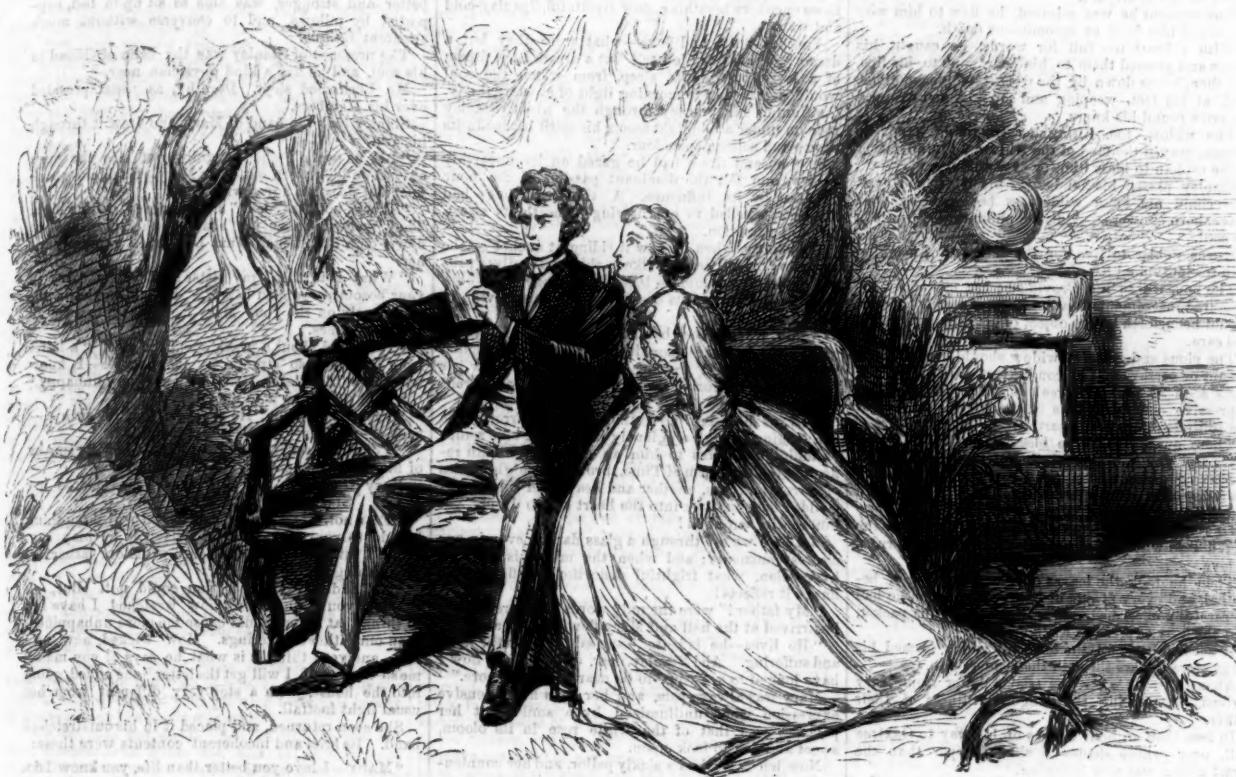
Ophelia kept her seat by the fire for some time, occasionally giving vent to a snort of wrath; but her anger subsided at length, and the ludicrous part of the affair appeared to strike her, for she laughed several times in her sharp way.

"Any how," she muttered, as she rose to make things fast for the night, "a offer's an offer; nobody can say it ain't, and from the way I tuk it, he'd never guess it was my first one."

She seized her candle, and with a parting glance, to be certain that everything was in order, departed to her own dormitory, giving her head a coquettish toss, which proved that, however much she had berated poor Reuben, and although she had no idea of accepting his flattering proposal to share the ten acre lot, she was not so mortally offended by the homage shown her charms as she had desired him to believe.

Our candid reader need not be surprised

(To be continued)



[STANLEY READING DELORAINES LETTER.]

STANLEY LOCKWOOD.

BY W. E. CHADWICK.

CHAPTER XXIII.

"One evening about the hour when the nightshades begin to fall, I was passing through a central street, and found myself opposite a shop, where amongst the showy articles which hung from the exterior of the door, to attract the vagrant eye, I noticed a scarf of brilliant scarlet, and crouching near it was that dark, misshapen form.

"He touched the scarf, he even lapped the bright silk with his huge red tongue. Perceiving my eyes fixed steadfastly upon him, he stalked away like a poor hungry dog detected in stealing the bone he has coveted. I followed him.

"I had seen this unfortunate and apparently harmless being before, sometimes gazing at the sun with a vacant, but as strong and unblinking a stare as that of the eagle, and sometimes prowling like the forest beast in the shadows of the woods.

"'Ben, do you love red?' I asked, when I had overtaken him. 'Ben loves red,' he immediately answered, 'cause it pretty.' I happened to have in my pocket a handkerchief of a deep crimson dye, resembling the one he is now grasping with insane delight.

"I held it towards him, watching his countenance as I did so. Its dull vacuity changed to animal capacity. I retreated, holding the handkerchief beyond his reach.

"He leaped up, endeavouring to clutch it, uttering wild and unintelligible exclamations. At length I yielded it, and with a low chuckling sound of exultation he hid it in his bosom. 'What are you going to do with it?' I inquired, feeling that I had found the clue to this Egyptian labyrinth of crime. 'Ben hide it, but Ben no tell where,' replied the idiot, looking at me with the ferocious cunning of a wild beast.

"I questioned him respecting the hiding-place of his treasures, but he only answered with a thousand indescribable grimaces, 'Ben no tell where.'

"My lord," continued Stanley, with deepening earnestness. "You may be assured that I did not give rest to my eyes, nor slumber to my eyelids, till my suspicion, or rather belief, was changed to conviction and certainty. Thank heaven it was a moonlight night, and the rays came down in silver showers on the shades whose depth I sought.

"It was the thicket where the smoke of innocent blood had so lately gone up to heaven, giving a deeper

horror to the conscious wood. But I saw not the form of the murdered 'maiden fitting by me' in that pale, ghostly lustre.

"I thought of the imprisoned boy, over whom the scaffold's doom was impending. As the night wind blew the boughs of the young oaks towards me, they seemed to me the outstretching of his imploring arms. In the murmurs of the blood-stained pool I heard his voice of patient agony. Every grey stone that was moveable by the hand of man I hurled from its ancient throne, in search of the idiot's treasure. Among these young oaks is one ancestral tree, which towers in patriarchal majesty above its verdant children.

"It contains a hollow, around which the green leaves form an almost impervious veil, and which might well be converted into a secret cabinet.

"Lying at the foot of this tall elder of the forest I beheld the Idiot Ben, with his tongue of flame gleaming in the moonlight, though leaden slumbers closed his eyes.

"In the leafy nest I have described, I discovered poor Jenny's shawl, with a piece of linen dabbled in blood, and wrapped around them was my own crimson handkerchief."

"Here a sudden cry from the prisoner drew the eyes, which were gazing with intense excitement on the counsel, towards him, whose innocence was now manifest to all.

"His face was hueless, and he fell forward on an arm that was involuntarily extended for his support. The mother tried to reach him, but she was wedged in by the crowd, incapable of motion.

"Water was passed from hand to hand till it could be applied to the fainting prisoner—fainting from the sudden transition from despair to hope.

"While they were restoring him to consciousness the judge directed that some of the officials should go to the wood, according to the directions of Stanley, and bring the articles concealed in the hollow tree.

In the meantime Stanley proceeded with the defense.

"Your lordship may not be aware that Idiot Ben has not long been a denizen of this town. He came it is scarcely known when, whence nobody seemed to know. Begging from day to day his crust of bread and morsel of meat, and sleeping at night in a barn or under a haystack, no one had troubled himself about his aimless, soulless existence.

"Obtaining from him some hint with regard to his former place of residence, and following the indication, I have ascertained that this is not the first time that his mysterious passion for scarlet has led him to

deeds of blood and violence. This gentleman can prove the truth of the assertion."

The gentleman to whom Stanley referred, said he was an inhabitant of the county town where Idiot Ben formerly resided.

He stated that a few years ago the people of that town were thrown into consternation by a murder as singular, and apparently as motiveless, as the one now under judicial examination.

A little child, who was dressed in a scarlet frock, was found bathed in blood, destitute of her showy garment.

The deepest mystery involved the transaction, till the little red garment, stained with a yet deeper red, was discovered in the possession of Ben, who was immediately arrested and imprisoned.

Soon after his imprisonment several men escaped from gaol, and Ben must have fled at the same time. Whether he had been wandering no one knew.

Nothing, he said, had been heard of the unfortunate creature till the inquiries of Mr. Lockwood concerning him, recalled the dreadful tragedy to his mind, when he immediately called on that gentleman to give him this information.

The exhibition of the shawl and blood-stained linen was hardly necessary to confirm the innocence of Willie; but when they were brought into court and unrolled before the judge and jury, a noise went through the hall, like the dull roar of the ocean. Idiot Ben, protruding his red, serpent tongue, shuffled forward, exclaiming:

"That are Ben's—Ben want it—Ben will have it!"

Then a loud simultaneous shout burst forth from the assembly, reverberating through the walls of the court-room, and rolling out of doors and windows, proclaimed through the length and breadth of the street and public square the innocence of Willie Deane.

It is unnecessary to relate the closing details of a trial which terminated in the triumphant acquittal of the prisoner, and the imprisonment of poor Ben, not for personal punishment, but for public safety.

The populace, in their enthusiasm, would have borne Stanley on their shoulders from the hall, if he would have permitted it; but, baffled in their attempts to almost deify the young orator, whose eloquence had excited them to momentary intoxication, they seized hold of the weak and slender prisoner, and carried him aloft with deafening acclamations.

With his long, dark hair floating from his white forehead, his pale face lustrous with gratitude and joy, his hands and eyes uplifted to heaven, in a kind

of devout ecstasy, Willie was borne along beyond the limits of the courtyard.

The moment he was released, he flew to him who had saved him from an ignominious death.

With a heart too full for words, he caught his hands and pressed them to his heart and to his lips, and then, borne down by the weight of his emotions, sank at his feet, weeping and sobbing, and wrapped his arms round his knees.

The widow, too, lifting her trembling hands to heaven, prayed the God of the widow and the father of the orphan to bless him for ever and ever.

Stanley passed his hands over his moistened eyes. Life could not be a wilderness bedewed by such heaven-born showers. A divine philanthropy warmed his soul.

It was nobler to live for the interests of mankind than for individual happiness.

The boy, whose life Providence had made him the honoured instrument of saving from a death of shame, should henceforth be the object of his peculiar interest and care.

The pious and grateful widow should never know a want or sorrow that he could avert.

As soon as he could free himself from the almost oppressive congratulations of the crowd, he sought the solitude of his own apartments.

There on his knees he blessed the God of innocence and youth, the great God of truth and justice, for having given him a mind capable of bonafide his fellowmen, and an heart open to the wants and sufferings of oppressed humanity.

He renewed the solemn dedication of himself to the sacred Trio whose altar he had elevated on the ruins of love.

Then he took the leaves of Flora, the ring of betrothal, and every pledge of faith and affection he had so carefully cherished, and sealing them in a packet, sent them by express to Rudland Park.

It seemed that all the elements which formed his being were to pass through the refiners' fire.

About a week after the trial a letter from Mary arrived, announcing the dangerous illness of their father.

In less than an hour he was on his way to Oaktree Hill, over whose shades a shade deeper than the forest gloom was now hovering.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Fair was that young girl and meek,
With a pale, transparent cheek,
And a deep-fringed violet eye
Seeking in sweet shade to lie,
Or if raised to glance above,
Dim with its own dew of love,
The clouds in spirilike descent
Their deep thoughts by one touch had blent.
And the wild storms linked them to each other :
How dear can sorrows make a brother.

Human.

Murmur glad water by.
Faint gales with happy sigh
Come wandering o'er
That green and mossy bed,
Where on a gentle head
Storms beat no more.

Ibid.

WHEN Stanley was about halfway on his sad and solitary journey he met a very elegant equipage, which was accompanied by a gentleman on horseback.

So absorbed was he by his meditations he came upon them before he was aware of their approach, but at one glance he recognized the coal-black eyes of Deloraine, on whose brow a cloud as black as night was resting.

No sign of greeting was exchanged between the two haughty equestrians. Stanley felt the darkness gathering over his own face.

Leaning back in the carriage with listless languor, her arms folded in a lace shawl, he had a glimpse of Flora.

Raising her eyes dreamily as the shadow of the horseman fell on the carriage window, she beheld Stanley Lockwood, and a quick vibration of light, cold and dazzling as the night gloom of the aurora borealis, passed over his features.

They passed each other thus—they, whose hearts at their last parting throbbed against each other with mutual pulsations, whose lips exchanged the most sacred pledge of love and faith.

How estranged, how altered now! Could that pale, cold, icy-looking girl be the bright, impassioned L'éclair—that haughty, stormy-browed young man the warm-hearted and impulsive Deloraine? Was he indeed Stanley Lockwood? and was he hastening to perhaps a dying parent?

This last interrogation subdued his rebellious thoughts. Death! the great peacemaker—Death! the stern rebuker of passion. As its shadow glided on before him, chill and mournful, all present interests were lost in its awful eclipse.

A few short years, and those resplendent eyes whose

altered glance had just now filled him with such anguish and indignation would be rayless and closed; those once love breathing, now disdainful, lips clay-cold and wan.

Youth, beauty, and love—what were they but a dream? What was life itself but a dream? the dream of a feverish, troubled sleep, from which the soul would awake in the morning light of an eternal day. Continuing his journey through the night, Stanley rode on under a midnight moon, his spirit bathed in its serene and solemn splendour.

A thousand times had he gazed on its unearthly beauty, and felt the dominant passion of the hour glorified by its influence. A thousand times had his heart swelled to overflowing beneath its sweet, celestial attraction.

Sometimes, when he saw it riding at anchor on the azure waves of heaven, like a ship with silver sails and majestic motion, he beheld an image of his own ambition, so lofty in its destination, so answering in its course.

Again, when it rose behind an argent cloud, leaning softly over to gaze upon its images in some limpid wave that seemed panting to receive it, he saw her type of love, mirroring itself in some pure, transparent heart.

Now, as he gazed up to the beautiful mirror of the sun shining so high and lonely in the dark blue zenith of midnight, it was to him an emblem of Faith reflecting to the pilgrim of Time, through the nightshades of sorrow and care, another and heavenlier time. Oh! could Flora but look into the heart she so deeply, yet innocently, wronged!

But here we see through a glass darkly, even in our clearest moments; and when the mirror is shivered by passion, what frightful distortions disfigure the image it reflects!

"My father!" were the only words he uttered, when he arrived at the hall and Mary flew into his arms.

"He lives—he is better," she said, "but still weak and suffering. Ah! Stanley, dear, dear brother, how I have longed to see you—to be near you once more."

Mary was always pale, and her eyes had a pensive expression when unillumined by a smile, but her pallor was that of the white rose in its bloom, sweet and fair to look upon.

Now her cheek had a sickly pallor, and her countenance was very sad.

Was it filial anxiety alone that caused this? or was it blended with some secret grief?

He thought of the dark-browed Deloraine, and felt a conviction that his sister's happiness was wrecked as well as his own.

Never had he loved her with such heart-sinking tenderness.

"My Mary, my darling, my own sweet, precious sister," he cried, kissing her colourless cheek.

"Mrs. Hasselton, my more than mother!" Her arms, too, were round him, her mild, benignant countenance emanating unspeakable love.

Mr. Hasselton greeted him with all the affection of a father, and all the pride of a man.

He was proud of the glorious boy he had reared, for his fame had gone abroad into the land.

"My father!" again repeated Stanley, grasping Mr. Hasselton's hand. "Is he really better? Is his life in danger?"

"There is danger," answered Mr. Hasselton, "but there is hope also, so Doctor Lewis says, who never deludes his friends."

Mary led her brother to the room where her father lay, at whose bedside Dorothy was seated in her usual costume.

The invalid was asleep, and their gentle entrance did not awake him.

Dorothy could scarcely repress a loud cry of joy at beholding Stanley, but she did, though the big drops burst from her eyes and rolled down her face.

Holding the faithful creature's hand in his, he stood looking at the altered, but placid features of his father.

He had been suffering from a lingering disease, which had gradually reduced his strength, without giving him acute pain, and though he was pale and emaciated, there was a peacefulness, there was even a smile, on his sleeping countenance that was soothing to look upon.

There is certainly a magnetism in the eye, which the spirit feels even through the prison bars of sleep.

Mr. Lockwood awoke, while his son was gazing sadly, silently upon him, and stretched out his feeble arm. Stanley beat to the enclosure, and laid his cheek against his father's.

"My son," said the invalid, "I bless heaven for this. I feared we never should meet again in this world."

"Many happy meetings, I trust, are in store for us yet, my father," answered Stanley with quivering lip. His heart had lost hope than his words.

"Yes, Stanley, I trust so too," said his father, raising his eyes to heaven.

The return of his son seemed to renovate his exhausted system, and for a few days he appeared better and stronger, was able to sit up in bed, supported by pillows, and to converse without much apparent fatigue.

The presence of Stanley was the balm of Gilead to his soul, and he had a kind physician near.

Mr. Lockwood slept. Dorothy, as usual, presided over his slumbers.

Stanley took the hand of Mary, and drew it through his arm.

"Let us walk," said he, going out into the open air. "You look worn out, dear Mary. Such close confinement does not agree with you."

"It was not that, dear," she answered, with a sigh. They walked under the shade of the trees, and sat down on a little bench Muza had made expressly for her.

"What is it, then, my sister? Do you carry in your bosom a wounded heart?" He laid emphasis unconsciously on the you. Mary looked at him through her long lashes.

"I received about a week ago," she said, "a letter from Deloraine so strange, so inexplicable—I know not what to think of it. It has made me very unhappy."

"Will you show it to me, Mary?"

"I fear—I dread. He speaks of you in such a—such a—manner—I can't comprehend it."

"I ought to see it. I ought to know how he speaks of me. Mary, much may depend upon it."

Mary trembled. Her lips turned as pale as her cheeks. Stanley put his arm round her.

"Fear not, sweet sister," said he. "I will do nothing to add to your unhappiness, whatever he may say. Could I think of deeds of violence while our father lies languishing on his sick bed."

"No, indeed. I know you could not. But, oh Stanley, you cannot think how wretched I have felt to think that letter should cause me more unhappiness than our father's sufferings. How wicked, how selfish; and yet I think it is what he says of you makes me so wretched! I will get the letter," she added, going into the house, with a step very different from her usual light footfall.

She soon returned, and placed it in his outstretched hand. It brief and incoherent contents were these:

"MARY—I love you better than life, you know I do. From the first moment I saw you to this—this dark and troubled one—you have been the polar star of my soul. Every vision of future happiness has been inspired by you. And now, something dreadful has come between us. Something that I fear will destroy the happiness of all. Your brother, Mary, whom I so loved and trusted, whom I verily believed one of the hierarchs of heaven, so much he seemed lifted above his kind—he, the friend and brother of my soul, has insulted my sister beyond forgiveness or remedy. With unexampled ingratitude and matchless cruelty, he has repaid a love passing the love of woman. Mary, I love, I adore you. I shall never cease to do so. But as long as one spark of vitality burns in my being, I must detest, abhor, and despise your brother."

CHARLES DELORAIN.

"Ah what have I done? How rash, how wrong, I have been," exclaimed Mary, recoiling from the indignation fire that blazed in the eyes of Stanley, as, hurling the letter to the ground, he sprang up and was hurrying from her. "Stop, Stanley, don't leave me. Only tell me what he means. What have you done that he should use such dreadful language? I know you cannot have done anything wrong, never; I hate him for saying so; I never shall love him any more; you don't look at me, Stanley; you won't speak to me. Aias! I have done very wrong; but I meant to do right."

Stanley turned at that beseeching voice, and an expression of pity softened the fierce splendour of his countenance. He came back, and sat down by her on the little shaded bench.

"Heaven knows what I have done, Mary. I do not. I will tell you all I know." He then related the history of Norah, the return of his letters, the chain and lockets, as well as his subsequent letter of explanation.

That a circumstance capable of so simple and honourable an explanation should have caused such an insulting termination of friendship and love, seemed incomprehensible to both, and an unpardonable incomprehensibility.

Mary had a good deal of honest pride concealed under her gentle, loving exterior. She abhorred her brother, and an injury inflicted on him stung her to the quick of her heart.

Before she saw him, Deloraine's letter had made her unsexably wretched from his mysterious accusations of Stanley. They filled her with a vague horror.

That Deloraine should accuse him without cause she tried not to believe; that Stanley had given him cause she could not believe. Now, when she heard the only possible reason that could be assigned, indignation lifted her above the weakness of sorrow.

She was very beautiful in her anger. It gave such life and spirit to her face.

"That dear Norah!" she cried, "how I love her. She did what I longed to do—nursed you on your sick bed, and soothed you back to life and health. To grudge her the possession of a simple locket and one of those beautiful locks of yours, and think it an insult to them, seems shocking! To take it away from the poor girl, how wicked! And you do not know where she is, and whether you will ever see her again!"

Mary was so excited by the wrongs of Norah she forgot her own. She hated the proud and jealous Flora, and wondered sisters could influence brothers so much. She wished she had never known Deloraine, never thought of love, or allowed a "stranger to intermeddle with her joy."

"Let us go to our father's apartment."

He found him awake, and refreshed by his repose. Taking Dorothy's place and telling her to go and rest, he seated himself by the bed's head, so that his father could not look into his face. Mr. Lockwood took his son's hand and drew him gently towards him.

"I want to see you, my son," he said, "as well as to feel the value of your presence. What a feverish hand is this?" Then looking fixedly upon him, "Stanley, you are greatly moved. If it is the thought of my danger, you must not let it unman you thus. Submission to our Maker is easy. You will find it so, my son."

Stanley was too truthful, too ingenuous, to allow his father to impute filial sorrow to the cloud which warning passions had left upon his brow.

"Father, submission to God may be learned. Whatever blow He may inflict, though it should rend my heart in twain, I trust I can say, 'His holy will be done.' But, when we suffer from the inconstancy, and injustice, and insults of man, oh! father, teach me how to curb my rebel passions; tell me what I ought to do!"

"Ah! my son, has it come so soon, this bitter knowledge of the injustice of man? Yet, this is the natural consequence of your growing fame. It is only in the sunshine the shadow is seen."

"No, sir, it is not envy. But let me tell you all. Your wisdom shall guide me, and I feel that your sympathy will console. Father, if you were not lying here on this sick bed, my hand would be grasping the avenging steel. It burns for redress. This is the fever that makes my pulse throb so quick, and fills my veins with a boiling fluid."

Then he related the history of his estrangement from Flora and her brother without any reservation, the struggle he felt the morning of the trial, his self-conquest, and determination to devote himself henceforth to the highest and holiest duties.

He repeated the contents of Deloraine's letter to Mary, which she had not shown to her father, declaring his conviction that her happiness was destroyed, as well as his own. Mr. Lockwood listened with breathless attention, and when Stanley had concluded, laid his hand impressively on his, and said:

"And yet you believe that Norah is the cause of all this?"

"The innocent one, father. What else could the return of the locket to me imply?"

"Stanley, I feel constrained to reveal to you what I promised to keep secret, while you lay sick and wounded. Had you no suspicions that Norah was other than she seemed?"

"None, father, none."

"Yet Norah and Miss Deloraine are one."

"Good heavens, father, it is not possible!"

"It is even so. Before she entered your sickroom, she sent for me, telling me her real name, and placing herself under my protection. She told me, the knowledge that I was with you emboldened her to take the step she had done. She dared not expose herself to the censure of the world, by appearing in her true character; but maddened at the intelligence of your danger, she had braved everything but contumely, to be near and minister to your sufferings. How tenderly, how faithfully, she ministered to them, with what virgin delicacy and modesty she maintained her character as a lady, while she preserved her disguise as a servant, your own memory can bear witness."

Stanley listened to this astounding revelation like one awaking from a nightmare.

He could not realize its truth. Yet, when he recalled the form of Norah, the contour of her chin and neck, a certain graceful motion of the head peculiar to Flora, he wondered at his own stupidity.

Then he recollects the darkened chamber, the close cap that concealed her magnificent tresses, the deep green shade that covered her brilliant eyes and the upper part of her face, and the simple stuff dress and white apron that clothed her beautiful figure, and the disguise did seem impenetrable.

"Could Flora do all this, and then cast me from her?" he exclaimed. "How unfeathful is the mystery of her conduct!"

"Believe me, Stanley, some secret enemy has been at work, and is probably still busy in undermining your interests. She who could prove her love as Miss Deloraine has done, is no light, capricious damsel, actuated merely by impulse or passion. She has a depth and truth of character I have never seen in one so young. You have often told me, Stanley, that you had never known me fail in my estimate of man or woman. I am willing to stake my life—ah, that is of little value, it is fast waning away—I will only say—nothing could shake my confidence in the strength and purity of this young lady's affection, in her self-sacrificing and generous nature."

"Bless you, father—not once, but ten thousand times—for this undoubting trust. You make me blind for my own injustice, as much as I do for my blindness and stupidity, in not recognizing Léclair through any disguise. But surely I must have known her sweet and silver voice. The ear cannot be deceived."

Mr. Lockwood smiled.

"Your Flora has all a woman's wit. I saw her myself put cotton between her rosy lips, to thicken that sweet and silver voice. She closed every avenue to detection, she coloured her face and hands of a darker hue with walnut dye, and her disguise was so perfect I do not wonder that you never penetrated it."

"Had you ever seen her in the splendour of her beauty, father, you would wonder that I did not discover some gleam that would show her identity."

"I saw her once," said Mr. Lockwood, "without her disguise. It was one evening when you were sleeping under the influence of a powerful anodyne. She took me to another room, and stepping into an adjoining closet, soon returned another, and yet the same. She had washed the stain from her face, taken off her cap and released her rich curling hair, and taken the shade from her dazzling eyes. I never saw such a transformation looming towards me, and placing her hands with endearing frankness in mine, she said, 'I wanted you to see me as I am for one moment.' To look at this magnificent creature, and think it was for love of you, my son, that she assumed the guise of a menial, braved the displeasure of her friends, and the risk of discovery, was enough to move the heart of any man. I yearned to take her in my arms, to my heart, and tell her that I loved her as a daughter: and I did. Stanley, I shall never see her again, but bear to her my parting blessing. As sure as there is a moon in yonder heavens she loves you, and an enemy is trying to sever her from you."

A sudden faintness came over him, and he sank back on the pillow. Stanley, in alarm, presented a cordial to his lips, which soon revived him.

"This has been too much for you, my dear father," he said, with bitter self-reproach. "I am killing you by my selfishness. Do not speak again."

"One word more, Stanley. This enemy, I believe—but you will discover him."

Closing his eyes he pressed the hand of his son, who, struck by his words, felt as if thick scales were falling from his eyes, and thick clouds rolling away from his strongly darkened understanding.

Stanley did not forget to repeat to his sister the conversation he had had with his father, and Mary slept that night with a somewhat lightened heart.

Mr. Lockwood gradually grew weaker, till even Doctor Lewis, the all-hopeful physician, gave up hope.

But his disease seemed scarcely to diminish the strength of his lungs, and his mind was clear and calm to the last.

"There is retribution in this world, as well as in the next," he said. "I am dying, the victim of my early excesses. Nature, sooner or later, avenges her violated laws and assists the judgment of the Almighty."

Seeing Dorothy, who was standing by the bedside, he held out his hand to her, with great emotion.

"The blessing of God and that of a dying man rest upon you, faithful friend and affectionate guardian of my orphan children. When bereft of a mother and neglected by a father, with none to cherish and protect, you fostered them in your arms of love and shielded them from poverty and wrong. To their gratitude and kindness I command you; to the care of heaven I commit you."

"Oh, master," sobbed the weeping woman, "you were always good to me."

The day before he died he called Stanley to him, and said:

"I have one request to make. It matters little where our dust is laid when the spark that animates it is fled, and yet all have our wishes on this solemn subject. Your mother is laid in the tomb of her fathers, far away from hence: they came, obedient to her dying prayer, and bore her where I may not follow. But there is one spot, one sweet and quiet spot, where I would fain sleep in my last repose. We have often sat together there, while the pensive voice of the fountain murmured in our ears. Bury me, my

son, in the little churchyard near the Long Moss Spring, where the river's roar and the fountain's gush shall be my requiem. When you told me of poor Morgan's quiet grave, I thought how pleasant it would be to rest in that peaceful spot."

"Even so, my father," replied Stanley, "it shall be as your soul desires: your children will one day come and lie down by your side. It always seemed to me that the sleep of the grave would be sweet near the sound of those lulling waters."

Mr. Lockwood died, but so triumphant was his faith, so peaceful was his departure, that death was disarmed of its terrors and grief of its sting. Nature mourned, but religion consoled.

They carried his remains to the lovely spot his dying lips had designated.

Mr. and Mrs. Hasselton accompanied their adopted children. It was the desire of Muza to go with Dorothy, and these two faithful friends, and we may say benefactors, of both families followed him they loved to his quiet grave.

With indescribable emotions Mr. and Mrs. Hasselton beheld a scene consecrated in their remembrance by the most dear and interesting associations.

To the apparently accidental circumstance of lingering one night under that humble roof they were indebted for years of happiness.

They had been happy in the friendship and companionship of the good and gifted man, who was then lost to society, a slave to one evil passion—happy in the love and gratitude of the lovely girl, the noble young man, who, but for them, might have remained in the obscurity of a ferryman's cabin.

They looked at Stanley and recalled their last thought—a spirit like his would have forced its way to distinction, though mountains and rocks opposed its path.

It would have fulfilled its glorious destiny. Theirs was the honour and the joy of assisting its upward progress.

It was a solemn, yet not melancholy, burial. The curate from the nearest village was in waiting at the ferryman's cabin to perform the solemn service. The beautiful fountain smiled and sang, as if it welcomed a bride to the magnolia bough.

The long moss gently waved and curled against the sides of the snowy basin, and the water-lily's undulating stem glided like a green serpent under the waves.

Within sight of the spring was the now almost disused burial-place, and close to the spot where the old soldier rested, his former friend was left to his long repose.

The ferryman and his wife had prepared refreshments for the sorrowing party, who, having liberally compensated their humble entertainers, returned to Oaktree Hill.

Reader, we hope you are not weary because we have brought you once again to the borders of the Long Moss Spring. It is the last time we shall ask you to bear us company to that sweet and hallowed spot. Farewell, fair and peaceful waters! Farewell, ye green and silver-tinted plumes, ye bright-leaved, verdant hollies! Superb magnolia, sentinel of the silent dead, we bid thee, too, farewell! Perchance some young lovers, after crossing the river's tide, may seat themselves under thy shade, and write their vows on the waxen petals of thy regal blossoms, heedless of the dust that consecrates the holy spot. But to us, perennial spring, thou speakest of thrilling memories. We love thy name. It is embalmed in our recollection, and it sounds like music to our ears. Sweet Long Moss Spring—farewell!

(To be continued.)

A BLIND professor of music, named Price, organist at one of the metropolitan churches, has committed suicide by hanging himself. Blind from his birth he had shown great talent for music, and was in a good position. In November last he and his wife were knocked down by a horse and gig, and his head was cut open, since which time his mind has been affected.

DURING a thunderstorm lately a coastguardsman, named Richard Gough, while going his round on the cliffs between Eastend-lane and Scraps-gate, in the Isle of Sheppey, was blinded by a flash of lightning. Fortunately, he was near the latter station at the time, and his cries brought another coastguardsman to his assistance. Every effort has been used by the medical men in the island to restore the man's sight, but without success.

A RUSSIAN artist is preparing, for the Paris Exhibition of next year, an allegorical representation of the events in the reign of the present Czar. A group of agricultural implements denotes the progress of the country in that branch of industry. A broken chain typifies the abolition of serfdom. Figures of Faith, Hope, and Charity commemorate the publicity of judicial proceedings, religious toleration, and the abolition of corporal punishment.

POISONOUS SLATE PENCILS.—The Government authorities at Cologne, have issued a circular, cautioning the public against variegated slate pencils. Schweinfurt green, which contains arsenic, is used for the green, chromate of lead for the yellow, and red lead for the red varieties. The circular points out the danger of this practice, especially to children, by whom slate pencils are chiefly used.

TEMPTATION.

By J. F. SMITH.

Author of "The Will and the Way," "Woman and her Master," &c. &c.

CHAPTER LIII.

III deeds will rise,
Tho' all the world o'erwhelm them to men's eyes.

Shakespeare.

On entering the village, the young men encountered General De Vere, who shook hands warmly with them both.

"Brave news!" exclaimed the old man, his noble features full of animation; "glorious news! We are likely to have another brush with the enemy! Soul intends to defend Toulouse! He has neither forgotten nor forgiven the thrashing we gave him in Spain! Fine occasion," he added, "for you youngsters to distinguish yourselves, and obtain another step before the war is brought to a close!"

"But is it sure?" eagerly demanded both the officers.

"Sure!" repeated the old man; "why I heard it from the commander-in-chief himself! Soul is a brave fellow, and I honour him for his courage, although he did plunder the royal palaces of Spain of their most valuable pictures! It was reducing the noble art of war to the trade of a brigand!"

The idea instantly struck Clement Foster that if the intelligence he had just heard were true, there was little chance of his obtaining an audience of Wellington on the eve of an impending battle. He therefore related his embarrassment to his constant friend, the general.

"Audience! letters!" repeated the old man; "are you mad? Why, he would not grant five minutes to the ambassador of all the pretty women in France! You don't know him—I do!"

"But to you, general?" urged our hero.

"Why, yes—perhaps to me he might!" answered the old soldier.

"Or to me, if you were to ask it for me!" added the pleader. "This letter, as you will perceive," he said, at the same time displaying the seal, "is from no undistinguished personage!"

"I will be the bearer of it!"

"Impossible, general!" replied his *protégé*. "My word is pledged to deliver it to the commander-in-chief of the allied armies with my own hand!"

"In that case, follow me, my dear boy!" exclaimed the general, after a few moments' hesitation, "and I will see what can be done! He can but refuse—and—at any rate, I will do my best!"

Turning his horse's head, the speaker accompanied the young man towards the *mairie*, where the illustrious warrior had fixed his head-quarters. A strong escort was drawn up, ready mounted, in front of the building; aides-de-camp and officers were crossing each other in every direction—some with reports, others hastening to execute the orders of their victorious leader.

In the vast saloon at the extremity of which was the private cabinet of his grace, were a crowd of officers, amongst whom Clement and his lordship recognized Colonel Barratt and the major of their regiment. The salute of our hero was returned with an air of superciliousness which seemed to demand what could possibly bring him to such a place. Surely he was not presumptuous enough to think of obtaining an audience, which they had been hours expecting in vain.

After ten minutes' absence, General De Vere returned from the cabinet of the Duke: his features were rather flushed.

"Follow!" he whispered to our hero; "and for heaven's sake, as brief in your answers as possible!"

"I understand!" answered Clement, who the next instant stood in the presence of the man upon whom the eyes of Europe were then expectingly fixed. His grace was then in the full vigour of manhood—age had not bent his slight but active figure, and his features bore all the impress of untired energy.

"You have letters for me?" he said, raising his eyes, but still continuing to write.

"I have, your grace."

"Why not send them through one of my aides-de-camp?"

"Because I gave my word to deliver them only

into your grace's hand! Permit me to observe that the arms upon the seal of one of them, induced me to believe it might prove of importance, and I chose rather to incur the risk of being censured for over zeal than a neglect of duty!"

The great commander held forth, his hand and took the letters; no sooner had he received them than his manner underwent a perceptible change.

"You have acted well, sir—exceedingly well—and I shall not forget the service you have rendered me! Now yours either, general," he added, turning to De Vere, "for introducing this gentleman. His name?"

"Captain Foster, of the—Dragoon Guards."

"Who distinguisht himself at Salamanca? I have not forgotten him! You may retire, sir—you have performed your duty—performed it well! I must attend to mine! In ten minutes an aide-de-camp will bring you orders!"

As our hero left the cabinet of his grace, his old friend whispered in his ear:

"The letter was of importance, and you were right in seeing him yourself, after all!"

The letter with the imperial seal which had so excited the curiosity of our hero, bore the signature of no less a personage than Alexander, Autocrat of all the Russias. In it all diplomatic and civil officers holding allegiance to his crown were strictly commanded to protect the bearer, Madame Krudner, the wife of the Swedish Ambassador—to afford her aid, assistance, or escort—and to treat her with the same honour and respect due to a member of the imperial family. In a postscript addressed to the chiefs of the allied armies, the request was repeated, only in a less imperative form.

"And who was Madame Krudner?" we think we hear our readers exclaim.

A little patience, and they shall be enlightened on the subject.

The Baroness Krudner, wife of the well-known diplomatist of that name, was one of those religious enthusiasts who, having faith in the reality of their mission, deceive themselves, even though they fail to deceive the world.

There are few pretensions, however extravagant, but find some dupes. After Mormonism, we can credit the success of any imposture. The stock of human credulity appears inexhaustible. On the same principle that fast nephews and grandsons regard uncles and grandfathers as banks provided by nature to keep up the necessary supply of the circulating medium, charlatans in religion or science consider the gullibility of mankind as sent for the same wise and benevolent purpose.

Amongst the many illustrious dupes of Madame Krudner's pretensions—who, to do her justice, believed firmly that her mystical ravings were inspired, and not the outpourings of a diseased brain—was the Emperor Alexander. In fact, so extraordinary was her influence over him, that on more than one occasion it directed the policy of his government. It has even been asserted that his final rupture with Napoleon was decided by her predictions.

There are many still living who remember this lady in Paris, at the time the allies held possession of the capital of France, her frequent appearance, in the singular costume we have described, in the carriage with His Imperial Majesty, and the assiduous court paid to her by the corps diplomatique.

Some considered her in the light of a mere political agent; others as an instrument of the Jesuits, then actively, though secretly, plotting for the restoration of the Papal chair and the re-establishment of their order. Most probably she was something of both—since the treaty which secured the sword of Bernadotte to the allies, and guaranteed to him and his successors the throne of Sweden, was concluded through her influence.

At the risk of her life, directly after the Battle of Leipzig, she entered France, and actively mixed in the intrigues on foot for the downfall of Napoleon and the return of the Bourbons, who, like our own worthless family of the Stuarts, never remembered a friend in prosperity or learnt a lesson from misfortune.

Although the strong mind of Wellington doubtless ridiculed her pretensions, humanity as well as prudence bade him conciliate her influence. The request of an ally like Alexander was not to be disregarded.

Clement and Lord Peapod were chatting with General De Vere and a party of officers, when an aide-de-camp entered the saloon of the *mairie*, and inquired for Captain Foster.

Every eye was directed towards him in an instant. Colonel Barratt and the major especially wondered what important affair he had contrived to thrust himself into again. The former maliciously observed, that an officiousness which would have ruined any other man in the service, only served to advance the fortunes of our hero. It would be difficult to describe the amount of hatred he honoured him with.

"You will take an escort from your regiment, sir," said the officer, "and accompany me!"

"Escort?" repeated the colonel, haughtily; "and may I ask, by whose authority Captain Foster is to take an escort from my regiment? The proceeding is most unusual!"

"So perhaps is the service!" replied the aide-de-camp, drily—for he had not been over-pleased with the tone of the speaker.

"But—"

"The order is from the commander-in-chief!" interrupted the officer; "I leave it to your discretion to disperse it!"

The colonel bit his lips, and bowed to conceal his mortification and surprise. At that moment the bell in the cabinet of the duke rang twice, and an orderly announced that his grace would receive Colonel Barratt and the major. Little did the two worthies imagine the rating they were sent for to receive on account of the conduct of their subalterns.

It is now time that we return to Colonel Harrington and Walter Trevanian, who was impatiently counting the few moments of life which remained for the gallant soldier.

The surgeon, who renewed his visit to the Chateau Vert soon after the departure of our hero and Lord Peapod, saw the case was hopeless. Science could do nothing to arrest the progress of death, whose relentless hand had already seized his victim.

"He may last an hour!" he said, addressing Marshall and his companion, whom he naturally mistook for friends of the dying man; "but there is not the slightest chance of his rallying again! Poor fellow! his last battle is fought, and death is the victor!"

Walter Trevanian tried to look as though the intelligence pained him; but, despite his hypocrisy, a glance of satisfaction and triumph escaped him, which the speaker could not avoid observing.

"The colonel's death will give him a step," mentally ejaculated the surgeon—the only reasonable excuse he could find for his want of feeling at such a moment.

Unfortunately, the case of Colonel Harrington was not an isolated one. England had paid for the victories her armies had achieved with the blood of the bravest of her sons. The high spirit and indomitable courage of more than one brave fellow had enabled him to bear up against exhaustion and physical suffering, and follow the army on its march, when he ought to have remained in the military hospital at Bordeaux. Doctor Benfield had other patients to attend to, and he quitted the chateau before the arrival of Clement Foster and the aide-de-camp.

The two confederates congratulated each other on his departure.

"Duncan," said the dying man, addressing his orderly, "I feel that I am going. I shall never see England again, or the friends who love me! It is the will of heaven, and I dare not repine! A soldier owes his life to his country, and should pay the debt of honour readily, if not cheerfully! You have been faithful," he added, "and I am about to confide to you my last instructions."

The poor fellow vainly endeavoured to repress the tears which, despite his long habits of military discipline, would start.

"I can't help it, colonel!" he faltered; "indeed, I can't! You have been a kind officer to me, and I feel—forgive my boldness in saying so—as if I were about to lose a friend instead of my commander!"

Harrington made an effort, and stretched out his hand to the speaker, who sobbed like a child, as he respectfully pressed it in his own hard, honest palm.

"I was the friend of your first master, Edward Trevanian," said the colonel, after a pause.

"I know you were, sir—he frequently used to speak of you! I know how much he wished to see you on the night of his death!"

"He did see me!"

Surprise arrested for an instant the sorrow of poor Duncan, and he gazed upon the speaker with mingled curiosity and surprise.

"More!" continued the dying man; "he confided to my friendship and honour a sacred trust, which I am not permitted to fulfil! You must execute it for me!"

"I! Oh, colonel! A poor ignorant man!"

"But an honest one!" interrupted his commander; "and that is a title which the proud cannot always boast! Make no more objections!" he added; "at first I thought of confiding poor Edward Trevanian's will to the officers who are quartered in the house—but their conduct last night has determined me! I have reflected, and my choice is made!"

(To be continued.)

The population of Scotland has increased at the rate of only 29.20 per cent. between 1831 and 1861; in 1831, it was 2,373,561, and in 1861, 3,066,638, or not more than the population of London.



[THE UNITED SISTERS.]

THE AMERICAN SISTERS.

AFTER some four years of war and turmoil, it is pleasant, to have something from the United States on which the mind can dwell without necessarily associating one's ideas with rapine and bloodshed; and although the last imported "notion" from that side of the Atlantic, may be neither poetical nor grand, it is at least interesting, for it comes embodied in the persons of two attractive girls, who, by a singular freak of nature, seem to have been produced upon an enlarged, or rather an improved, model of the Siamese Twins of some quarter of a century back. Burns has told us that in the handiwork of nature—

—Her prentice-hand she tried on man,
And then she made the lasses, oh!

and the idea of the Scottish bard is amply warranted, by the appearance of the American Sisters, when compared with that of the Siamese Brothers.

These girls are negroes of slave parentage, born in Anson County, North Carolina, and at the present time are about fourteen years of age. The proclamation of President Johnson, and the decree of Congress, has given liberty to the parents, and to their children, who are consequently free to dispose of themselves, with consent of their parents, to the best advantage. With a view to this end, the Sisters are now exhibited at Raleigh, North Carolina, where they naturally excite much attention: their former owner is their present exhibitor, under a contract with their parents, and she purposed to bring her interesting charges to this country, where we doubt not they will obtain admirers, amongst those to whom the Hot-tent Venus was simply an enlarged model of feminine beauty, and Tom Thumb and the Irish

Giant were, each in his sphere, the *ultima Thule* of manly proportion.

These American twins are more closely connected, both physically and mentally, than were the boys of Siam. The connection of the Sisters commences upon a level with the shoulders, and terminates with the spinal extremity, and a touch of either at any point below that connecting integument, sends a sensation to the brain which is mutually felt; but if the touch is above this ligature, it is perceptible only to the one so touched! A yet more wonderful fact is asserted in connection with these children, "each can converse with different persons, at the same time, on entirely different subjects, and one can amuse herself with cards, while the other reads or sings."

The Sisters are described as pleasing in countenance and singularly interesting in their manners, and it is only just to those who have had the care of them to their present age to say that no pains have been spared to preserve their health and promote their comfort. The contract under which they will visit Europe has, we are informed, been entered into with a full appreciation of their claim to public sympathy and protection, as well as to their future welfare.

Under any circumstances, the fate of these children must be considered an unenviable one. Isolated from companionship with girls of their own age, and presented to public gaze as objects of curiosity and wonder, they must, as the mind becomes matured, from the singularity of their formation, feel themselves as in the world, but not of it; they can have no affinity with their species, for they are exceptions in the scale of humanity; and yet, without doubt, their sensitive organs may be as fully developed as are those of beings whom nature has more favoured, by being less eccentric in her formation of them.

Looking at this wonder of nature from a physical

point of view, our astonishment is increased when we find that in the complex arrangements of the human structure—wonderful in their simplicity, yet intricate beyond the finite power of man to unravel in a lifetime—nature has contrived, in this instance, so to interweave and mingle the six hundred various muscles, which, according to Galen, are comprised in the anatomy of mankind, as to produce, either by elongation, or intermixture in a mysterious form, the integument by which these girls are inseparably united—inseparably, but if parted, with the extinction of life to each! The same authority has told us that in the arrangement of those muscles "there are ten different points to be secured before the just development of the whole can be attained, namely, proper figure, just magnitude, right disposition of the several ends, upper and lower position of the whole, and the due insertion in their proper place of the several nerves, veins, and arteries." Now these children, so exceptionally united together, are of good form, fair proportion, and enjoy good health. These are amongst the mysteries of nature: who shall explain the seeming contradiction?

THE DREAM FULFILLED.

CHAPTER I.

"Go to Aix-les-Bains, and seek your fortune!" It was very curious that Antoine Le Sevres, a handsome young man of one-and-twenty, should thrice dream that those words were spoken to him.

"I can't go to Aix-les-Bains," he muttered; "that is in France. What the mischief set me dreaming after that fashion? 'Go to Aix-les-Bains and seek your fortune.' I should know him anywhere, that old greybeard of a fellow—red gown, green slippers, and a funny little, yellow cap set at the top of his head. He sported a pipe, too—pretty expensive one, now I remember; and he puffed it before and after he spoke. How the dickens am I to get to Aix-les-Bains?"

Antoine lay back against a shabby, high chair that had once rejoiced in a covering of brilliant crimson, but was now dilapidated almost beyond repair. Two rickety stools stood near, and a second-hand music-stand, that he had purchased the day before, held several sheets of copied music. A green baize bag hung up in a small niche over the low cot bedstead, where the young man was wont to stretch his weary limbs.

Antoine was, by nature, a musician. His father and mother were both dead—himself and two brothers supported one little sister, who was boarded in the same house in a more comfortable manner.

Dolly, as they called her, but more properly Dora Le Sevres, was a lovely, girlish creature, scarcely yet fifteen, but looking and behaving like one much younger. She had ruddy cheeks, a slight figure, laughing eyes, and the deepest and most bewitching of dimples.

She was still going to school, where all the accomplishments she cared for were sewing and singing. In the latter she excelled. Her voice was birdlike in its upper notes, bell-like in its lower, clear, sonorous, deep. She loved her brothers very dearly, and often said, when she was a woman, they should not work for her so hard. But the brothers, noting how beautiful she grew, only shook their heads and smiled significantly.

"How in the world shall I ever get to Aix-les-Bains?" muttered the young man, uncrossing his feet, and crossing them again. At that moment a light step was heard—his chamber-door flew open, and there stood Dora in the doorway radiant.

"Ah, Dolly! come in."

She obeyed him, still smiling, and burst out into a beautiful Italian air, in which her voice sounded angelic.

"Why, Dolly! where did you learn that air?" he asked, lifting himself into an upright position.

"Heard one of the street organs," said the young girl. "I stood there till I learned and could hum it. Isn't it beautiful?"

"Yes; it's in 'La Sonnambula,'" he replied.

"Oh! do get it—get your violin and try it; have you the words?"

"No; not the words, Dolly," he said, reaching for his green baize bag; "but I'll play it for you."

"Do you forget that Jerome and Harry are coming to-night to sing?" asked Dolly, after she had listened delightedly. Antoine was pulling aimlessly at the strings.

"No; I wish they would come. I brought home a new piece."

"A song?" exclaimed Dora.

"Yes, a quartette; there it is on the stand." Dora went forward and hummed the air. "I like it," she said, decidedly; "it's prettier than the Italian one, to my mind. How sweetly that minor comes in."

She went back again. Antoine was still heedlessly snapping the strings.

"What makes you so quiet?" asked the girl, looking at him narrowly.

"Thinking," replied her brother.

"Of nothing pleasant, then, I'm sure. Come, please, tell me."

"Thinking how much I should like to travel," said her brother.

"To travel—and so should I," cried Dora, vivaciously. "To see strange cities, the vineyards, the castles—above all, we should hear such singing! Oh! if we were only rich, and could."

"But we are not rich," said Antoine, sighing. At that moment the two elder brothers came in. They wore a downcast look, and were instantly pried with questions.

"The matter is that Toil and Co. have failed," said Harry. "and we are thrown out."

"That's bad," Antoine responded, a troubled look haunting his face.

"But you can find another office," said Dora.

"No; not in these times."

"Well, we can still sing," said the girl, hopefully; "hard times needn't stop that."

"By Jove!" cried Antoine, slapping his knee, "I believe we could do it!"

"Do what?" queried the three listeners.

"Strange I never thought of it before; why, we can sing, can't we? I believe there are not four such voices within a hundred miles. Let us sing, then—not only at home; the public shall hear us."

"We should fail, I fear," replied Jerome, the eldest of the three. "What could such homespun fellows as we do before an audience? Dolly's voice wouldn't sound louder than the squeal of a mouse, she'd be so frightened."

"I don't know about that," said little Dora, gravely. "I don't believe I should be afraid with you three in sight. And then Antoine would play his violin; I don't believe they ever heard such playing."

"Oh! of course not," said Antoine, smiling, and kissing her.

"I like it," cried Harry, after a few moments of thought. "I tell you I like it; but there's a heavy expense attending all such attempts. However, here's five pounds to begin with. I was paid off honourably."

"And here's ten to go with it, if we could do anything," responded Jerome.

"And now we've really got at it, let's estimate the cost," said Antoine, his handsome face all aglow as he took out pencil and paper. "We should have to get out bills, of course."

"And tickets!" cried little Dora, clapping her hands—"only think! for our own concert. Isn't it grand?"

"Advertisements," ejaculated Harry; "they'll cost a mint, though."

"Yes," added Jerome; "but then if we sing well together, we shall eventually make money."

"We're not able to lose any," suggested Antoine. "Jerome, you must be our business man. I'll compose music by the yard; write our own songs, you know—it's just the work for me; inspired my ambition. What shall we call ourselves?"

"The Mountain Pards," ventured Dora.

"Too aspiring, little maiden," said Jerome, with his kindly, though grave smile. "I think it will be best under our own name—the Sevres family."

"How would you begin?" queried Antoine.

"Oh! in some of the towns about," Harry ventured. "As Antoine suggests, it will be best to sing touching, simple home-songs, such as will appeal directly to the hearts of the people. We can advertise in their papers, and issue our own bills."

"Very well; prepare the posters, then, and the advertisements. I go for striking the iron while it's hot," said Antoine. "We must be in earnest about the matter. Dolly, what do you think you'll do when you come to stand before a hundred people?" He had caught her arm and twirled her about.

"Do? Why, I'll sing, of course," returned the girl, nicely.

"Good! that's the right answer," cried the brothers, laughing.

CHAPTER II

BEHOLD our group seated around the fire in a pleasant little parlour devoted to them by a country inn-keeper. The bills in blue, red, and yellow letters, had been posted in every conspicuous place, to the delight of the village youngsters, who stood round-eyed before them. All the principal personages of the town had received cards to the effect that a new and well-trained company of singers would strive to entertain them—and all was expectation.

What should Dolly wear? had long been an anxious consideration with these good brothers. Dolly had decided the matter by very quietly entering in a crimson merino frock, with a white frill at the neck. She had tied two bits of black velvet round her little wrists, which one of her brothers had arranged for her. Her hair, in its natural curl, hung idly over a bewitching face. On the whole, the

brothers unanimously declared that she never had looked better; but they were pale and anxious, while she was smiling and ruddy.

Their bills promised largely—what if Dora failed? They were not afraid for themselves. At any rate, they could hear the stamping of feet along the hall, in goodly numbers, too, it seemed—that was encouraging. The landlord put his cheery face in at the door.

"You're to have a bouncing house," he said; "almost every seat is full. Hadn't you better go in?"

Fortunately, there was a back entrance; and during the day Antoine had rigged up a curtain, behind which Dora might retire between the pieces. As they entered, some intuitive process their presence was ascertained; the little boys began to whistle and stamp, and make hideous noises with their fingers between their teeth, after the manner of rude audiences. Antoine gazed anxiously towards Dora. Her colour changed a little.

"I don't mind it at all if they will keep still while I sing," she said, quietly.

Jerome thought that the three brothers had better go on alone first. Dora would not listen to the proposition. "It will give me confidence to begin with you," she said, with more than the gravity belonging to her age.

As they went on with beating hearts, looking so handsome, standing side by side, Dora childishly holding the hand of Antoine, there was silence for a moment—the silence of admiration. Then came a storm of applause—they had made a most favourable impression, that orphan family; and as their clear tones blended, trembling a little at first, the people listened almost breathless. Such singing had seldom been vouchsafed in that place. It gratified the ear; above all, it touched the heart, for the minstrels sang of their wants, their hopes, their losses, and their loves.

And when Dora stood before them alone, and in her childlike beauty sang a little song, destined hereafter to be hummed by cradle-sides, the enthusiasm of the audience knew no bounds. They shouted for the youthful singer till she, blushing like a rose, came timidly forward and repeated the charming ballad.

That first concert was a success. Overall their expenses they made a handsome sum. The newspapers gave a glowing account of the singing and the singers, not forgetting to eulogize Dora in terms of almost extravagant praise, wisely withheld from the young girl, who was contented that she was aiding her loving, noble brothers. It was requested that the concert should be repeated—and this time hundreds were unable to obtain admittance.

Thus it happened that the brothers needed no more to depend upon salaries; for, go where they would, their fame preceded them. Dora's gentle ways, her beauty, and freedom from affectation, gained her friends wherever she went. People petted and caressed her as if she were something sent for their especial love. Antoine studied constantly, and soon excelled as a violinist. The name of the family became as a tower of strength. It was the fashion to attend these sweet, but homely concerts; to throw flowers at the feet of Dora, who, in her dress of simple Swiss muslin, devoid of all ornament, save the ribbon or the rose in her hair, looked at times almost angelic.

People began at last to hint, here and there, at a tour on the Continent. At this the elder brothers looked grave.

They had made much money—why not invest it now and settle down?

Where was the use in exhausting their means in travelling?

What favour could they, the simple, the uneducated, possibly find where only the greatest, the most noted artists, met with special approbation?

But Antoine, all in a fever of hope and desire, urged them to go.

He remembered his dreams. Dora was not less anxious:

After many a long consultation, it was decided at last that they should go; and accordingly they took passage in one of the steamers for the Continent.

To their great astonishment, thither had their fame preceded them.

In a quiet, unambitious way they issued bills and tickets, anticipating utter failure.

The great hall in which they made their débüt was crowded: their little songs, so simple and unique; the peculiar harmony of their voices; the lovely face of Dora, so exquisitely pure, and the native grace with which she poured out the silvery melody of her voice, took them by surprise—and the honest audience emulated the enthusiasm of their brethren over the water.

Plaudits, favours, and money gathered as they went on.

Everywhere they reaped rich rewards, and found themselves, in six months, fortunate beyond their wildest hopes.

"Now," said Antoine, "let us take a vacation, and go sight-seeing on our own account. Dora wants to see Paris—so do I. We must visit the hill-sides in some of those old towns where the grapes grow—what do you say?"

Of course they were all willing; and, of course, they went.

Dora was a little worn down: her cheeks grew pale.

They must find a watering-place, where the sight of the sea might revive memories of home.

They consulted guide-books and a physician. He directed them to go to Aix-les-Bains.

"At last, then," chuckled Antoine, "I am on the road to fortune."

CHAPTER III

THEY found this French watering-place barely durable.

It was a resort for invalids *par excellence*. Hardly a ruddy cheek was to be seen; only men and women with straw hats, elongated faces, and grumbling voices, going hither and thither, bathing, snuffing, and grumbling.

Even Dora's sunshine could not fight them up here.

They had decided to leave, and were taking, as they thought, their last breakfast at Aix-les-Bains, when there entered a tall, pale, hook-nosed gentleman, who rejoiced in a long, white beard, a fiery-red dressing-gown with gilt frogs, a pale yellow smoking-cap, which he doffed, laying it beside his amber-pipe, or meerschaum, and a pair of bright green slippers.

Antoine flushed and turned pale again—the identical man of his dream! What was going to happen next?

The stranger glared at the little company—gazed again, a look of keen pleasure lighting up his piercing grey eyes, and then addressed them in good, sonorous English.

He talked rapidly—asked and told news; and after breakfast, fastening upon Antoine, he said:

"You play well, sir—you have deserved success."

"How?" stammered the young man, to whom the other was a total stranger; "did you—have you—"

"I heard you in London, and I followed you up for six concerts, and feared I might never hear you again. Of course, you will give a concert here?"

"Among these French people? Oh! no, sir."

"Then you are only pleasureing?"

"That is our object for the present?" replied Antoine.

The stranger thought for a moment.

"That is so much the better; for now my daughter can hear you."

"How?" interrogated Antoine; "we shall not give a concert."

"I mean," replied the other, "that if your chief object now is pleasure, I must have you all at my château. It is only five miles off; and my daughter is recovering her health there. I assure you it would lay me under great obligations if your brothers and yourself, with that charming little sister, would consent to pass some weeks with us. We can promise you sport in the way of fishing, shooting, and sailing; and—" he hesitated a moment. "I feel as if it would be well worth a thousand francs to have Belle hear your delicious music. She has no companion; how she would love that angelic girl. Perhaps I can offer you other inducements," he added, seeing Antoine's cheek flush when he spoke of money. "I possess a violin one hundred and seventy years old—a violin," he added, reverently, "that has felt the touch of the greatest artist Europe ever saw—Paganini?"

Antoine's eyes sparkled. To play upon such an instrument, what would he not attempt! A consultation was held—the brothers accepted the invitation; and one hour afterwards they set out in the stranger's private carriage, leaving their baggage to be carried by stage.

At the end of their journey a house, beautiful as a palace, came in view. The lawn, shaded by venerable oaks of a century's growth, led to an entrance that, for majesty and splendour, could scarcely be excelled. The richly stained glass, statues of ivory whiteness, pillars and arched arches, were as bewildering as beautiful, as the senses of the simple minstrels. But if the household fittings and adornments within were luxurious and stately beyond comparison, the inmates were quiet, modest, and refined. They were Madame Holdsworth, an elderly lady, a pattern of dignified grandmothers; and Bella Holdsworth, a little fragile creature, beautiful as the day, but pale, very pale and languid. Here our singers were soon at home. Their songs charmed the invalid into sweet forgetfulness; and when Mr. Holdsworth brought in, with reverent touch, the enamelled case containing an ancient, well-worn instrument, a genuine Cremona, and allowed Antoine to draw dulcet strains from its vene-

rated strings, there could not be a happier heart than his.

"I have been offered twenty thousand francs for that instrument," said the old man, stroking his snow-white beard; "but nothing would tempt me to part with it. If my little Belle, there, marries a man, not only with music in his soul, but at his finger-ends, the instrument shall be his. Otherwise I shall be obliged to bequeath it to my son, who is still at college, and unfortunately, though he loves music, cannot play, neither does he care to."

Antoine felt the red creeping up to his cheeks. He looked over to the farthest end of the room, where sat Dora, turning over the leaves of a book of famous prints.

Belle sat near, her white arm over Dora's shoulder, enjoying her delight. "It would not be very hard to love such a woman," he thought, tenderly drawing a strain of magic sweetness from the old Cremona. But should he dare aspire to unite himself with the daughter of a millionaire?

However, when he had listened to the old man's story, he felt more hope. Mr. Holdsworth was born amid the mountains of Hampshire, a poor boy, the son of a worthy farmer.

By early and steady application, he became a clerk in a rich Boston firm—then a partner; then, becoming through self-help a master of the French language, he was trusted to found a branch-house of the business in Paris.

This and fortunate speculations had enriched him beyond his wildest desires while he was yet a young man.

Belle was the youngest of five daughters. All the others had died at the early age of fifteen; but a competent physician had assured him that if Belle reached her seventeenth year, she would be likely not only to live, but to become a strong, healthy woman.

The prediction seemed about to be verified; for the young girl was now nearly eighteen, and since the coming of the minstrel family a magical change was observable.

Antoine, the handsome, frank, engaging Antoine, had interested her heart. At his coming she blushed—at his going became pale. He likewise loved her, but dared not tell his love—he wished to be perfectly honourable.

Both father and mother, however, read the case—it was not difficult. They found in the young man high sentiments of honour, strict principle, and an unblemished reputation. The old merchant said one day:

"Antoine, you play so well, I don't know but I shall give the violin to you."

"And Belle!" eagerly exclaimed the young man—then turned his head away suddenly.

"Yes, and Belle, too, my fine fellow," was the response, "if she be willing."

This was joyful news, and joyful was the result. Antoine found a lovely wife—fortune enough—at Aix-les-Bains.

The brothers were established in business by the old millionaire; and three years after the student-son, now one of the best lawyers in Paris, led to the altar the little warbler, Dora Le Sevres.

M. A. D.

RISE IN THE PRICE OF FISH.—Codfish were contracted for in Peterhead in 1762 at 7s. 6d. per 100, the retail price, when cured, being 2s. 2d. per dozen. This year the curers have contracted to pay 1s. 2d. for each fish, or £5 12s. 6d. per 100, being a rise of over 1600 per cent.

We are delighted to hear that the Rev. Dr. Cumming has declared that cholera is sure to break out amongst us before a twelvemonth is over. As the doctor's prophecies are considered to be wretched, improbable, and unpracticable, there is a comfort in his prediction about the cholera.

ON LISTENING TO EVIL REPORTS.—The longer I live the more I feel the importance of adhering to the rules which I have laid down for myself in relation to such matters:—1. To hear as little as possible of whatever is to the prejudice of others. 2. To believe nothing of the kind till I am absolutely forced to it. 3. Never to drink into the spirit of one who circulates an ill report. 4. Always to moderate, as far as I can, the unkindness which is expressed towards others. 5. Always to believe that, if the other side were heard, a very different account would be given of the matter.

BUILDING ON GREENWICH PARK.—The public require to be perpetually on their guard against encroachers on their rights and privileges; but it is too bad that the Government, which ought to protect the public, should in any case themselves attempt to deprive them of these rights and privileges. It is almost as bad when a watchman breaks into the repositories of those he ought to protect; and robs them of their valuables. Many years ago one of the late

Commissioners of Greenwich Hospital (an office now extinct) was allowed to use a portion of the park as an orchard, attaching it to his residence, which was also built upon the park grounds. Instead of restoring this land to the park, now that the office with which it was connected has become extinct, the Admiralty are advertising it for building leases, in the prospect of adding some £80 or £90 per annum to the funds of one of the wealthiest institutions in the country. A deputation of those interested in the integrity of the park have had an interview with Mr. Shaw Lefevre and protested against this proceeding, and he has promised to lay the matter before the Admiralty.

BRITOMARTE, THE MAN-HATER.

By E. D. E. N. SOUTHWORTH,
Author of "Self-Made," "All Alone," &c. &c.

CHAPTER LXVIII.

His eyebrow dark and eye of fire
Showed spirit proud and prompt to ire;
Yet lines of thought upon his cheek,
Did deep design and counsel speak;
His forehead by his casque worn bare,
His thick moustache and curling hair,
Dark brown and grizzled here and there,
But more though toll than age.
His square turned joints and strength of limb
Showed him no carpet knight so trim,
But in close fight a champion grim,
In camp a leader sage.

Scott.

LEAVING.—Elise we must go and look after Justin from whom we have been separated too long.

It is true we have heard that his regiment has been engaged in several sharp skirmishes, and that in every one of these fights he distinguished himself alike by his personal courage and military skill.

We have heard that, for gallant and meritorious conduct, he was promoted to the rank of major, and that, by the death or disabling of his superior officers, the temporary command of his regiment, then on duty, devolved upon him.

Major Rosenthal, for faithful and efficient services, was promoted to the rank of colonel, and ordered to assume the command of the—cavalry.

The next morning Colonel Rosenthal, mounted on a noble war-horse, set forth for his destination. He was attended by a single orderly, Sergeant Hay, the friendless youth whom Britomarte had kissed and blessed on the moving of the brigade, and who was thenceforth the object of Justin's especial care.

It was a glorious autumn morning after the storm, and the passage of the mountains on this route was neither difficult nor dangerous.

And it was yet early in the forenoon when Colonel Rosenthal descended into the old road, leading towards a dense wood, which was still far distant.

But the glory of the morning had no power to lighten the gloom that overshadowed the young officer's spirit.

In truth, he had both public and private cause for depression.

The former was, of course, grief for the wide-spread ruin wrought by the war, and sickness of soul with "hope deferred" by its long continuance and indefinitely postponed end.

The latter was distress about his sister Erminie and his beloved Britomarte, and his intense anxiety concerning the fate of a young orderly sergeant, whom, while in temporary command of the regiment, he had detailed on special duty, and who had left him about seven days previous to this, and had not yet been heard from.

This boy was an especial favourite with his superior officer.

As by instinct Justin Rosenthal soon singled the boy out from his comrades, and selected him as one of his own orderlies, Hay being the other.

Now it occurred that while Rosenthal was in command of the regiment, there came rumours of the reappearance of one of the enemy's chiefs, who had once before made his name terrible.

He was reported to be in the neighbourhood of L.—, reorganizing his band of desperadoes, who were flocking to his standard by scores, by fifties, and by hundreds.

Either he was not there, or his encampment was well concealed, and the people of the country were keeping his secret.

There was not even a rumour suggestive of their whereabouts.

It became now advisable to send some person of equal tact and courage, who should go among the country people in the vicinity, to discover the retreat, and find out what foundation there might be for the rumours that were afloat.

The duty must be undertaken voluntarily, of course; but no one in the regiment was found willing to go upon this dangerous expedition, until William Wing, the major's second orderly, proffered his services.

His officer was surprised and softened by this devotion in one so young and tender as this boy, and he kindly and candidly set before him the extreme perils of the enterprise.

But Wing was firm, and respectfully represented that his very youth would be his protection, as it would render him an object of less suspicion to the enemy; and he begged that he might be permitted to render the required service.

So the colonel had consented, and the young orderly, disguised, had left some seven days before, and since that he had not been seen or heard from.

And now Colonel Rosenthal's soul was pierced by remorse for having suffered the boy to go upon such a fatal errand, and by grief for his probable fate; for scarcely a doubt remained upon the officer's mind that his spy had been discovered, and had fallen a victim.

With a spirit burdened and darkened by these thoughts and feelings, Rosenthal rode on his way.

So few travellers passed this old, deserted road, that the sound of horses' feet, galloping rapidly towards him, startled Justin and caused him to look up; when, to his unspeakable joy, he recognized Wing.

Smiling, the boy saluted his officer, and sprang from his horse.

"Oh, Wing, my child! I am so rejoiced to see you safe back again! What news?" eagerly exclaimed Rosenthal.

"Great news, major," said Wing, who knew nothing of his officer's new rise in rank—"great news, sir! I have met with a complete success."

"That is glorious! Wing, you shall have a lieutenant's commission for that!"

"Thanks, major; if the new commission is not to remove me from your side," said the orderly.

"Foolish boy! Do you weigh your attachment to me against such an honour as that?"

"No; heaven knows I do not; for my attachment to you would so weigh down the honour that it would send the lieutenant's commission flying!"

"We shall not be separated, Wing. I shall take good care of that. I am going on to take command of a cavalry regiment. After you are promoted, if you should be found capable of fulfilling the duties of the office, you shall be my adjutant and live at my head-quarters. But where were you flying so fast when I met you, Wing?"

"To report to you, colonel."

"Well, you have an opportunity of reporting here. Mount your horse, Wing, and ride on with me. I have managed to get you and Hay detached from your late regiment, and transferred to the one of which I am about to assume the command; so that you may both be near me, as formerly."

"Thanks, colonel," answered Wing, springing lightly into his saddle.

"Now give me a full report of your expedition, Wing. Yet let it be a brief one, since brevity is the soul of wit."

"It shall be brief as a military order, colonel. When I left the camp, seven days since, with the prisoner's clothes on my back and the soldier's pass in my pocket, and your pass, rolled up into the compass of a hazel-nut and wrapped in water-proof skin, tucked into my cheek like a quid of tobacco, so that I could even swallow it in case of extreme emergency, I took the way to L—, avoiding the highway and keeping pretty much to the country roads and bridle-paths. I stopped at the farm-houses, ostensibly to procure food or lodging, but really to get information. I passed for a soldier on leave going home to L— to see my friends; and to prove my words true, I showed them the pass that we took from the prisoner William Gill, whom we captured near C—."

"But, Wing, there was danger in that."

"Sir, there was danger in every step of the way."

"Brave boy! But suppose you had met with people who knew the person of this William Gill?"

"Sir, I had to risk that, and to use some little address. On coming to a farm-house, at the close of the day, for instance, I would be taken at once to be a soldier, and I would be received and treated kindly; soon I would take an opportunity of asking my entertainers if they knew a family of the name of Gill. Almost invariably it happened that they knew no such family personally; though in some instances they knew of them. I would express myself sorry for that, as I was a connection of that family myself and had been in hopes of meeting friends on my road. When my entertainers betrayed suspicion of me, which was very seldom, I showed Gill's pass, which at once dissipated all their doubts."

"Well, and what did you hear from these people?"

"Plenty of abuse, colonel, which was quite natural, and in which I joined so boisterously, and with such seeming malignity, as sometimes even to provoke an apology."

"Well, but about the enemy?" inquired Colonel Rosenthal.

"I heard nothing for the first two days. Near

soon, on the second day of my journey, I fell in with one of our forage parties. I was stopped immediately. But I took out my quid of water-proof skin, and unrolled and exhibited your pass, and told my story. I passed the night with them, and from them I learned that on the preceding night they had surrounded the house of Gill, with orders to arrest him and his sons; that they had been fired upon from the windows of the house, and several of their number wounded and two killed; that they had then fired the house. The father and one son was killed in the fight that followed, and the other son was taken prisoner. There was another son, they said, who had been captured some six weeks before. I explained to the men that this first captured son was the one I was personating, and that the affair of the previous night would aid me very much in keeping up the character. In the morning I left them and went on my journey, striking deeper into the forest.

"I hope you soon struck the trail."

"Sooner than I expected. Look you, sir; I did not spare my flesh and blood. I gashed myself with several wounds, to make it appear that I had been in a fight. Nor did I spare the uniform. I burned and scorched it in many places, to make it seem that I had barely escaped with my life from the burning home-stead."

"You have a great deal of craft for one so young, Wing."

"Necessity is the mother of invention," it is said, sir. In this 'forlorn plight' I went on my way, until, near nightfall, I came to a lonely farm-house, on the edge of the forest, where there were some extremely ragged soldiers, smoking and drinking. I dragged myself to their presence, and told them my piteous story: how I was a soldier on leave; how I was going home to see my father and brothers, when, on the very night of my arrival, their house was burned, and they themselves bayoneted by the soldiers; and how I had barely escaped with my life."

"There, again, you ran a risk, Wing! Suppose these soldiers had personally known Gill?"

"I provided for that, colonel. The first question I groaned forth was whether they knew the Gills. No—none of them knew the family personally, though one man said he had heard of them, and that they had a son in the army. So you see, my colonel, all the rest was easy enough. I had only to say that I was that son, and to tell them my piteous story."

"But suppose some one of their number had known the son by sight, and so had detected you?"

"Suppose the earth had opened under my feet, colonel? I beg your pardon for speaking so lightly, sir; but one was as likely to happen as the other. Both were possible, but neither probable. However, I had even provided for the remote contingency of detection before committing myself in my story. I had ascertained by observation that no one among them knew by sight any member of the Gill family. If they had, I should have passed myself as a distant connection, bearing the same name."

"And what was your motive in telling that story, Gill? Was it that you had got your hand in, or rather your tongue in, to the invention line of business, and couldn't get it out again?" laughed Colonel Rosenthal.

"Not at all, sir; I had a motive in saying that. I saw that the men among whom I found myself were members of some gang; and that they were after recruits. The event proved that I was quite right. For Sergeant Haddycraft, clapping me smartly upon the shoulder, exclaimed heartily:

"Well, my brave boy, a soldier does not sit down to weep over his wrongs, like a woman; he rises up to avenge them, like a man!"

"And that I mean to do," I answered.

"Well! Go on."

"When I had heard so much, my colonel, I thought it was about time for me to make my escape, and carry the information to the nearest fort. Fortunately for me, there was a terrible storm arose. Under its cover I made my escape."

"How did you pass their pickets, my boy?"

"I crawled through the dense and pathless woods, between the picket stations, until I got quite clear of the encampment. Fate still favoured me. Outside I caught a horse all saddled and bridled, that seemed to have broken away from his fastenings somewhere. Once mounted on the horse, I dashed on as fast as possible towards Fort R., where I arrived just before sunrise. I was stopped and questioned by our own pickets. I had no pass-word, of course; but I told my story, and was taken under guard up to headquarters, where, again, to Colonel D.—, I told my story; and in fifteen minutes or less time two companies of cavalry were mounted and sent off. I was detained in a sort of honourable captivity for several hours, and finally dismissed with a pass to return to my regiment at H.—."

"Before leaving Fort R.—, did you hear from the companies that went out after Corsoni?"

"Yes, sir; some of the men returned to report to Colonel W.— that my information was correct; that they had found the camp just where I had reported it to be; but that the band had probably received information of the approach of our forces, for that they had hastily evacuated the premises."

"Then the chief and his band were not captured?"

"No, sir; but the cavalry were still in search of them when I left."

"And that is all, Wing?"

"That is all, sir."

"Well, Wing, I hardly know for which quality you deserve the most praise: for your shrewdness, or for your courage. If I have any influence in the proper quarters, you shall receive a lieutenant's commission for this service."

"Thanks, colonel."

"Your pardon, sir. What I did was done for the service of my country and for the pleasure of my colonel!"

"But the lieutenant's commission—that is an affair of another colour, eh, boy?"

"Yes, sir. I hope I have earned that, or shall earn it in some nobler manner than by serving as a spy."

CHAPTER LXIX.

Ho! who rides there?

The tramp of hoof, the clash of steel—

The rebels round them coming.

And they turned to the right, and rode along the edge of the forest for some four or five miles, when they saw approaching them from the opposite direction a body of horsemen.

"That must be a detachment of our cavalry, Wing. What do you think?"

"I think it is, sir. But I can't be sure yet. The clouds of dust prevent me seeing them clearly," answered the boy.

"And then they are so far off. Let me see," said the colonel, taking out his field-glass and "sighting" the approaching party.

"I am nearly sure they are our men, sir," said Hay, speaking for the first time.

"Yes, it is a detachment of the cavalry now stationed at —. What is afoot, I wonder?" exclaimed the colonel, putting spur to his horse and galloping forward to meet the advancing party.

The officer in command of the squadron rode out to receive him.

The two met like old friends.

"Ho! Colonel Rosenthal! Happy to see you. Heard of your promotion this morning. Allow me to congratulate—no, not you, but—the regiment, on the acquisition of so brave a soldier and able an officer. I wish my company belonged to your regiment," said the cavalry officer.

"Thanks, Major O'Neale. But—what's out?"

"What's out? They are swarming into this neighbourhood like seven year locusts."

"Thanks to the courage and discretion of my young orderly, whom Colonel Rosenthal had praised; but the question was of too absorbing interest to admit of a moment's wandering from the subject, and so he replied:

"Your information, obtained by so much courage and tact, and at so great a risk, may be very correct; I have no doubt. But you, colonel, you are going on to W—?"

"Of course."

"And with only these two orderlies by way of body guard—?"

"Just as you see."

"I strongly advise you not to do so. The road is certainly very unsafe," said Major O'Neale.

"It is the road you have just passed?"

"Yes."

"And you saw nothing?"

"No—not a hair! But then they would not be apt to show themselves to a force like ours. But you and your two orderlies, colonel, would be a great temptation to them. If I might do so, I should strongly urge you not to go forward, but to turn back with us?"

"I am ordered to proceed to W— immediately, to take command of my regiment, and I must go on," said Colonel Rosenthal, decisively.

"Then allow me to detail a portion of my men to guard you on your way, colonel."

"Not on any account. It would be very unwise for you to do so; for the withdrawal of such a number of your men as could be of any sort of use to me in case of an encounter, would so weaken your force as to leave it liable to capture. No, I must go on with my boys and trust to Providence," said Colonel Rosenthal.

Major O'Neale still respectfully remonstrated, but with little effect.

"If you were to divide your men you would render your own force inefficient, without affording me adequate protection," said Colonel Rosenthal.

And so the friends parted—each going opposite ways—Major O'Neale and his command towards the ridge, and Colonel Rosenthal and his orderlies towards W—."

(To be continued.)

WHICH OF THE TWO?

If the bride have dark hair,
And an olive brow,
Give her this gold bracelet,
Come and let me know.
If the bride have bright hair,
And a brow of snow,
In the great canal there
Quick this portrait throw.

PAUL RADCLIFFE was to be married in a month. He had just put on a new neck-tie and brushed his handsome hair, for he was going to see her—her name was Rose Duncan, and he had been humming "Queen Rose of the rosebud garden of girls," while he dressed.

He either was sentimental, or was trying to be—much the same thing in effect. He took out some fresh gloves, but before he had put his fingers into them had to answer a knock at his door. It was a boy from the village with a letter.

"Postmaster sent me up with it," the urchin said, avoiding all useless words; "told me to say he overlooked it when he gave you your letters this afternoon."

Radcliffe took it, handed the little scamp a penny, and shut the door again. He stood and heard the boy whistle "Wait for the Waggon" as he went down stairs.

Then, when silence followed, he looked again at the letter, the first sight of which had startled him almost as if he had seen a ghost.

No, he was not mistaken. It was a handwriting he had never expected to see again, but which he had known once only too well.

He read it through as if under a spell. He grew a little pale, and his lip quivered once or twice beneath his dark moustache.

But he read on to the end. Then he unlocked a drawer, and took out two pictures—the faces of the two women whom he had loved in his life.

The lover of Rose Duncan had no business with the little crimson case, which opened and revealed that dark brunet beauty.

He had meant to destroy it long ago—would have done so before his marriage, probably, but had never yet had the courage.

When a love is altogether over, dead as death it may be, men often, I think, guard the relic with a curious, persistent tenderness. So it happened that he had now this face to look at.

He laid the two pictures side by side—Isabel Vaughan, with her dark, rich beauty, impetuous, tender, and singularly beguiling—Rose Duncan, violet-eyed, golden-haired, somewhat shy, dainty and delicate as hoar-frost. He was engaged to Rose, but—did he belong to her?

The past was simple enough. He had loved Isabel when he was eight years younger than now—loved her with the frantic fervour of twenty-two. They had quarrelled and made it up again for an intoxicating twelvemonth, after the manner of such lovers, but at last a word had separated them. Both were too proud to make any concessions, and so they parted.

Three years after, Isabel married some one else—a rich old man, whom probably she did not altogether adore—and the marriage had taken her quite out of Mr. Radcliffe's reach.

A year ago he had heard of her husband's sudden death. It was just after his engagement to Rose, and the tidings did not at all affect him. He would not have recalled his betrothal vows if he could. Rose suited him.

His resentment against Isabel still endured; and perhaps the memory of their stormy loves only made him the more tender to his violet-eyed darling, with whom he never quarrelled. So they had gone on, until now it was a month before their wedding-day, and this letter had some—letter just like the writer—eager, impetuous, passionate, but, oh, so enticingly sweet.

She asked it in only for his forgiveness; but he could read, all the way through, her longing for his love. She was frank as the sunlight, always, and she told her story as much in what she failed to say as in what she said.

She had evidently not heard of his engagement. News did not travel quickly from the country village where he had wood and won Rose. The letter had been directed to his old home, and sent after him here.

He would have believed himself proof against any

such influence; yet it stirred him strangely. The image of Rose seemed indefinitely removed from him. Isabel, with her pride, and passion, and sweetness, her changeable, alluring nature, seemed to reassess her old empire over his thoughts.

He studied the two pictures until he felt as if they were alive with some subtle magnetism. To which woman did he belong?

Suddenly he resolved that before he married he must be able to answer this question. He understood Rose very thoroughly—knew just how far he could trust her generosity—knew also that she would feel herself wronged more deeply by his marrying her with another woman's image in his heart, than by his open defection.

For her sake, as well as his, he persuaded himself he must be sure of his ground. He resolved on a somewhat singular step. He would go to Isabel, and test her power over him to the utmost.

If she could hold him, she should have him. In that case, to give up Rose would be the least wrong he could do her.

But with this thought in his heart he felt that he could not see her again. So he wrote her a note—these words:

"DEAR ROSE.—Just as I was coming to you, I received a letter hastily summoning me from home. An unforeseen emergency requires me to leave in the early train to-morrow morning. I shall be gone a week. Till then, my darling, wait for the explanation. I cannot make now, with your own sweet patience. "PAUL RADCLIFFE."

He was going to write "till then trust me," but he changed the phraseology of his sentence. Was he about to prove himself worthy or unworthy of her trust? There are times, perhaps, in most people's lives when they look into their own hearts as into unfathomed mysteries; and speculate as to what they themselves shall do, in a coming crisis, with an uncertainty as actual, and a curiosity far more vivid and real than one ever feels about the movements of another.

He sent the note; made all necessary arrangements for his journey; and then, because he did not want to think, went to sleep, as he had cultivated the convenient habit of doing whenever he wished, and slept until he was called to take his early start the next morning.

It was afternoon when he reached the still, old country town whence Isabel's letter had been dated. It was the place where he had first met her, one quiet summer's day.

Every inch of the landscape looked familiar. There were the hills, with the firs crowning them, amidst which they had wandered on sultry days, and caught the salt from the sea two miles away. There was the still lake, on which they had sailed on moonlight evenings, and gathered the white, odorous lilies; and the river down which they had sailed in their painted boat towards the wide and misty main.

In those hedges honeysuckles grew. Yonder was the sweet-briar from which he had stripped the thorns to make her a fragrant crown. He knew just where to find Isabel, too.

That house over the fields was her aunt's—would she be standing in the porch, as he was wont to find her eight years ago?

The same old room which he used to have at the village inn was vacant, and he established himself in it.

He almost thought he had been dreaming a dream eight years long, and that nothing was real but this old town, and his love for Isabel Vaughan.

He did not think of Rose at all—her image haunted other nooks.

It was to him, here, as if, eight years ago, an angel had breathed immortality on these scenes, and he walked among them still, himself unchanged.

After his simple supper he went out and rambled over the fields, in the sweet summer twilight, towards Mrs. Vaughan's house.

If a servant had come to the door, and he had asked for Isabel by her married name, Mrs. Bertrand, he would have remembered all that had come between them since the old days, and it might have broken the spell.

But fate managed the affair with the adroitness of a conjurer.

Down towards the gate, from the door, Isabel came slowly, with dreamy steps.

She was dressed in white. The crimson summer sunset bathed her in its radiant glow, rested on her heavy-falling black hair, kindled her dark bewildering eyes, made her red lips redder, and left a soft flush on her clear olive cheeks.

Change had not touched her, unless with added beauty.

"You have come?" she said, as simply and naturally as if she, too, felt that it was eight years ago, and his visits were a thing of every day.

She gave him her hand, and holding the long, slender fingers between his own he experienced a curious thrill of the heart.

A subtle magnetism seemed to hold and chain him. How well he remembered the feel of that delicate hand—so soft, yet so firm.

His eyes met hers, and an emotion he did not stop to define shook him.

At that moment he recalled Rose. Had she ever moved him thus? Had he ever loved her? Who did he love?

At any rate, he thought he would be perfectly true and fair.

Isabel should understand how matters stood, in the very beginning.

"Yes," he answered, as quietly as she had spoken, "I am come. You asked for my forgiveness, and I wanted to tell you with my own lips how entirely you had it. We were both foolish in those days—both wrong—you were no more in fault than I. I think we had a faculty for tormenting each other. Another thing I wanted to tell you, too—I am engaged to be married."

"To be married?" she said quickly, drawing a deep breath.

"Yes! You have tried the experiment. It is my turn now. I am to be married in a month's time. This is my betrothal."

He opened the little case which held Rose's miniature, and laid it in her hands.

If he had known her less thoroughly, he could not have guessed at the secret eagerness with which she studied that face.

She would be able to paint it from memory fifty years after.

This, then, was her rival—this golden-haired girl, with such depths of quiet thought in her violet eyes—such a sweet mouth!

There was no disputing her loveliness, but—could this meek child hold and satisfy Paul Radcliffe? That depended on whether he was changed from the old days.

If she could win him back, she would! She felt no compunctions of conscience about it.

No one could love him, she thought, as she did—she who had loved him all these years.

She would not give him up until she knew, beyond a doubt, that he loved some one else better. She said, hesitatingly:

"You will have a handsome wife. I want you to give me one week out of this month you have left. She need not grudge me that, since it is the last thing you can do for me."

It was precisely this experiment which Paul Radcliffe had come to try.

He was in an excited, desperate mood, which considered no consequences.

He had only this one idea, intensified by a man's selfish, instinctive longing for the highest personal happiness—he must marry the one whom he loved best.

A mistake there would be fatal. Isabel should have a fair field.

For one week he would remember only the intoxications of that other summer when he had been her lover.

If the old spell had lost none of its force, and if time had now so harmonized their characters that there was none of the old jarring, very well.

He was contented to abide the test, and, in the end, let his heart guide him.

"I will stay a week," he answered, looking at her steadily.

By some occult psychological sympathy she understood the matter as perfectly as he did, and knew that these seven days were given her to regain her old power, if she could. If she failed—but she would not fail!

"May I keep the picture this week through?" she asked, quietly, still holding the case in her fingers. "This is to be my week, you know. Since it is your last gift to me, let it be complete."

He considered a moment. It would be fair, he thought. The trial should be thorough. He would abandon all safeguards. So he let her keep the picture.

She went into the house to put it away, and came back presently with a scarlet shawl and a black lace hood, which suited her Oriental air.

Would it be her last week? Involuntarily both stopped to wonder. It was as much a mystery to him as to her.

An hour afterwards they sat idly rocking on the water—she with the odorous lily-buds in her hand. The perfume half intoxicated him with its remembered sweetness.

He had never gathered lilies since that other summer with her. The scene, the odour, the woman with her beguiling beauty enhanced by the unearthly charm of the moonlight—all was like the old days, save himself.

Or was he, too, unchanged? He made her sing to

him. Subtly sweet her voice rose and fell on the summer evening air:

Love that hath us in the net,
Can he pass and we forget?
Many suns arise and set,
Many a chance the years begot—
Love the gift is, love the debt,
Even so.

Love is hurt with jar and fret—
Love is made a vague regret—
Eyes with idle tears are wet—
Idle habit links us yet—
What is love? for we forget:
Ah, no! not

"Ah, no! no!" How the low, rich, passionate voice thrilled through his soul. For one moment he was tempted to forget all other ties, and then, and there, between the water and the sky, give heart and life into her keeping. But he remembered his resolve in time.

He would wait, as he had promised himself, to the week's end. Still, the silence that fell between them had dangers of its own. He felt its power, as he watched her in the moonlight, and yielded a little.

"Isabel," he said, more tenderly than he had yet spoken, "your marriage was a great surprise to me. Were you happy?"

She shivered perceptibly.

"What woman ever is," she murmured, so low that he could scarcely hear her, "who marries from pique, or vanity, or anything but the whole overwhelming love of her heart? But he was a good old man, and when he saw he could not make me happy he pitied me, and was very kind to me. I do not think, though, that he was sorry to die. I did not suppose at first that he expected me to love him; but when it was too late I found that he had hoped for it, and that his marriage with me was an awful disappointment. But he never blamed me. He was good. Sometimes I thought that I might even have loved him, if—"

She paused suddenly, and burning blushes overspread her face in the moonlight. He understood the sentence she left unfinished. She had loved him all these years.

Why had he bound himself to another? But, after all, it was she who had taken that step which first made marriage between them impossible. Where was he drifting?

His thoughts were in tumult, his brain on fire. He rowed hurriedly to shore, and took her back silently.

The next morning he went over to see her in a calmer mood. Twilight and moonlight have a glamour of their own.

But even by daylight he found that Isabel Vaughan had not lost her old charm. At twenty-eight her beauty was richer, riper, and yet more perfect, than when they had parted, that day which he remembered so well, her eyes glittering with passionate defiance. There seemed none of the old self-will about her now.

It had given place to a sad gentleness, ten times more winning. He surrendered himself altogether to the pleasure of her society—rode over the hills in the dewy mornings; spent hours in the cool, quiet parlour, when she read or sang, or they talked together of life and death, and all things unapproachable and mysterious.

At length the image of Rose began at times to haunt him strangely. Isabel still retained the picture.

He had nothing of Rose but his memory of her, and it was singular how powerful that was, at times. He found himself longing, now and then, for her presence, as one longs for a breath of cool, clear air after a fervid day.

Yet it was only now and then that these thoughts intruded. For the most part he was the loyal subject of his dark-eyed queen.

The last night of his stay they were out on the river, floating down the stream. The moon silvered the water. The air was filled with sweet odours.

Over the sea towards which they drifted, a softly veiling mist had risen. There was enchantment in the hour and scene.

Then, if ever, Isabel felt that her star was at its zenith. She exerted all her powers. Never had her beauty been so bright, her voice so sweet. Radcliffe abandoned himself utterly to her spell.

He took her home, entranced, bewildered, and resolved the next day to end his doubts; to take the final step, and be once more Isabel's lover.

Why he did not speak then he could not have told. It was, probably, only a blind, obstinate, half-unconscious adherence to his first determination to wait, before he committed himself, through the entire week, which would terminate with the next day's sunset.

At parting he held her hands in his for a long time, thrilled in every nerve by that curious magnetism of her touch, of which I have before spoken.

"Oh, Bel," he said, with lingering sadness, "why were you not as gentle before as you are now? Love was hurt by jar and fret, and now—"

He did not finish the sentence, nor did she answer, but he felt a falling tear on his hands as he turned away.

He went home, under the beams of the late moon. He did not think of Rose at all. He felt that his future lay in those hands he had just been folding in his own.

It was long before he was calm enough to sleep, and then his slumber was broken by a strange dream. In it he saw Rose lying dead. Her long fair hair floated away from her white, still face. Her lips were colourless. She was dressed for the grave, but her violet eyes were wide open, with a fixed, awful look in them—a look of reproach.

Frantic with agony he tried to approach her; but, though her pale lips did not move, he seemed to hear a voice—he fancied it came from her waiting soul, standing by unseen: "Not you—you left me to die alone."

He awoke, under the pressure of a blind despair; and for a long time his dream seemed so real that he could not shake off the impression.

He scarcely even wished to put aside its influence. A new insight had come to him. The anguish he suffered had electrified him into clearer perceptions. He doubted himself no more.

It was Rose, after all, who was dearest. Isabel magnetised his senses—Rose lived in the clearer atmosphere of his soul, the elect woman.

He rose with the first gleam of daylight, and collected his possessions together. At the earliest suitable hour he went across the fields to Mrs. Vaughan's.

I think Isabel understood the moment she saw him that her sun had set and her day was over.

"This is the last day," he said, quietly. "I find that to get home to-night I must start in the ten o'clock train. Will you get me the picture?"

She knew that she had failed; but she acquitted him of having trifled with her. She had understood, in the first place, to what ordeal she was submitting.

It was not his fault that the decision was against her. If he had found that he did not love her best, there was no more to be done.

When she came back she was very pale, but as quiet as pale. She put the picture in his hands, and said, humbly:

"Thank you for the week you have given me—the swift, bright, last week. She will have no reason to regret it, since its only result has been to teach you how well you love her. Good-by, now. When we meet next time we shall be beyond this sphere."

She lifted towards him her beautiful, sad face—the face he loved so dearly once—whose charm for him could never quite fade away.

He bent towards her, and left one kiss upon her forehead—his first in eight years—an offering to memory.

He went to see Rose that night with a vague fear at his heart. All day he had seemed to see her before him as she had been in the dream; but he found her a little sad, perhaps, from her unaccustomed loneliness, but quite well.

He told her his story, keeping back nothing, either of the old eight years' ago love dream, or the past week's infatuation. She was just one of those true and generous souls from whom one feels that it is robbery to withhold anything—a woman with the rare gift of understanding another's mood and seeing both sides of a question. When she had heard all, he whispered, looking with a thrill of apprehension into her sweet, silent face—"Rose, is it possible for you to forgive me? I could not have married you with one doubt in my heart but that I loved you best. Thank heaven, I know now, and shall know for ever!"

She bent her lips to his with a tender, forgiving pressure.

"You were right," she said. "It was just to yourself, and the most generous course towards me."

"And you will not doubt me?"

"Why should I?"

Why, indeed! With her hand in his, her eyes shining tenderly through their happy tears, her love soothed, comforting, strengthening, but never bewildering him, Paul Radcliffe found out to whom he belonged.

L. C. M.

GIGANTIC omnibuses, on a new model, have been constructed in Paris, specially for horse-races and other out-door sights. They are so contrived that upwards of fifty persons can be seated on the roof, and become a kind of travelling grand stand.

The bones of a gigantic sea monster have been discovered on the beach near the mouth of the Una, in San Paulo. It is 210 feet long, and the people in the neighbourhood state that it was cast out of the sea upon the beach three years ago, and remained there alive for several days. Two ribs are in an almost perfect state, being in length 24 feet, and 3 feet wide. This is for certain the veritable sea serpent, for it had no scales, and received the name of the great fish snake.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE OF SWALLOWS.—Swallows arrive and depart in the following order in this country: Arrive—1, sand martin; 2, chimney martin; 3, house swallow and swift. Depart—1, swift and sand martin; 2, chimney martin; 3, house swallow.

FACETIA.

MRS. PARTINGTON wants to know why captains don't have their ships properly nailed in port instead of waiting for to have them tacked at sea.

MRS. GRUNDY ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

Ah! drat the nasty foreigners; there's always some new bother, Some fresh to-do or piece of work with one of 'em or 'other.

And with the very words for which I haven't common patience, I can't bear to hear about what's called their complications.

Oh, dear me!

What a blessed world without 'em this would be!

I do despise their questions that's awaitin' a solution, And talk about that good-for-nothin' Federal execution; I wish they'd execute them there as causes all the robbery, And hang the criminals which planned the murder and the robbery.

Oh, dear me! &c.

Let dogs delight to bark and bite, each other's blood a spillin';

Let bears and lions growl and fight as much as they are willin';

But what consarns us is their wars puts us to stich expenses, For Hironclads and Harmstrong guns and all them their defences.

Oh, dear me! &c.

With all the forces they maintains, them filthy foreign nations Would soon be down on England, but for England's preparations.

And if they dragged us into war in spite of our objection, The duty upon tea would rise—that's always my reflection.

Oh, dear me! &c.

Their squabblin' sends the funds down, and I'm told the loss is shocking;

But all the stock as I got is invested in a stock-ing, Where thieves can't find—for we've birds too of that spread-eagle feather:

But English people ain't, like some, a lot of thieves together.

Oh, dear me! &c.

The French it was at one time, at another 'twas the Rooshians;

And now the rumpus is between the Austrians and Proosians.

Adrabbit 'em! I can't find words to say how I do hate 'em all:

I wish there was some powder, like, or stuff to extirpate 'em all!

Oh, dear me! &c.

Punch.

the late Duke of Beaufort was found sitting in his carriage by a party just come out of Boodle's. "Going to the ball, are you?" said Sir G—— W——. "Well, I suppose you'll be home again about the day after to-morrow."

It was said, in the olden times, that the body was more than raiment: but now the raiment is a great deal more than the body in value, and full five times as much in circumference.

A HUSBAND regretting the loss of his first, in the presence of his second wife, was told by her that "no one had more reason to wish his former spouse alive than she had."

An Irish gentleman, who had been spending the evening with a few friends, looked at his watch just after midnight, and said: "It's to-morrow morning; I must bid you good-night, gentlemen."

FASHIONS continue to change with unchanging changeability. For the current week, the ladies are wearing their dolls' bonnets and other people's hair. Next week it may be their dolls' hair and other folks' bonnets.

COOL!

"Is your horse gentle, Mr. Dabster?"

"Perfectly gentle, sir; only the fault he has got (if that be a fault), is a playful habit of extending his hinder hoofs now and then."

"By extending his hinder hoofs, you don't mean kicking, I hope?"

"Some people call it kicking, Mr. Green; but it's only a slight reaction of the muscles; a disease rather than a vice."

"PA, can a person catch any thing if he don't run after it?" "Certainly not." "Well, then, how did you catch the cold you've got?"

AMONG the advertisements last week in a daily journal appeared the following:—"Two sisters want washing," and that "A spinster particularly fond of children wishes for two or three, having none of her own, nor any other employment."

LANGUAGE.—A Spanish gentleman studying English, being at the tea-table, and desiring to be helped to some sliced tongue—in doubt as to the term, hesitated a moment, and then said: "I will thank you, mico, to pass me that language."

A QUAIL preacher in Alabama was accustomed to distinguishing the I. and II. epistles of St. John by giving out, "John with one eye," and "John with two eyes." It was some time before the people got the hang of it, but when they did, the distinction answered very well.

"FRANK," said an affectionate mother the other day to a promising boy: "if you don't stop smoking and reading so much, you will get so after a while that you won't care anything at all about work." "Mother," replied the hopeful, leisurely removing a very long cigar, and turning another leaf, "I have got so now."

The following purports to be a model medical puff: "DEAR DOCTOR.—I shall be one hundred and seventy-five years old next October. For over eighty-four years I have been an invalid, unable to step except when moved with a lever. But a year ago I heard of the Granular Syrup. I bought a bottle, smelt the cork, and found myself a man. I can now run twelve miles and a half an hour, and throw thirteen somersaults without stopping."

STABLE TALK.—We hear from the Government stable that the late, severe use of the whip has told upon some of the horses very much, and that they still bear the marks of their punishment. One of the grooms in the Rival stable said that you might know a Government hack any day, 'cos they was all marked with the brand of—. "Shame," interrupted an old whip, who was passing by. "You've just hit it," was the groom's reply.

BEFORE a Court of Common Pleas, a case of breach of promise was recently under consideration. The breach between the parties was apparent enough, but as to the promise there existed a slight shade of doubt, until the plaintiff set the matter right, as follows: Question by the defendant's counsel—"Did my client enter into a positive agreement to marry you?" Answer—"Not exactly, but he courted me a good deal, and he telling my sister Jane that he intended to marry in our family."

OILING A VENTILATOR.—A physician says that, as he was some months since on a steamer whose engine was upon deck, he sanitary in that vicinity to see the working of the machinery. Near by stood a man apparently bent upon the same object. In a few moments a squeaking noise was heard on the opposite side of the engine. Seizing the oil-can (a gigantic one, by the way), the engineer sought out the dry spot, and to prevent further noise of that kind, liberally applied the contents of his can to every joint. All went well for a while, when the squeaking was heard in another direction. The oiling process was repeated and quiet restored; but as the engineer was

coming quietly around towards the spot occupied by the doctor and the stranger, he heard another squeak. This time he discovered the true cause of the difficulty. The stranger was a ventriloquist. Walking directly up behind him, he seized the astonished joker by the back of the neck, and emptied the contents of the can down his spine. "There!" said he, "I don't believe that old engine will squeak again."

LITERARY CURIOSITY.—The following is a copy of an excuse recently handed in to a schoolmaster for the non-attendance of one of his scholars:

"capotogostaturing."

If our readers can make out to solve the above without having it labeled, we give up at once that they are more apt at such things than our humble selves; and for fear that there may be some one who would not understand it without an explanation, we subjoin the following: "Kept at home to go a tatering!"

TRUEFITT, the fashionable hairdresser, upon being asked what hair was the richest, replied quite in an off-hand manner: "The plain golden, sir; in every sense, sir, there's none so rich as the plain golden." His inquirer nodded assent, and said, "Perhaps you're right, Truefitt. It stands to reason, you know, that hair which is plain gold, must be richer than any hair which is simply plaited." Truefitt acquiesced, but was evidently puzzled with the abstruseness of the proposition. He retired into his studio to ponder over it.

MOST MUSICAL.—A Scotchman being asked to say what he thought "real music," answered, "Real music! hoot, mon, 'gin ye wad hear *real* music, listen to the bag-pipes!"—*Punch*.

MASONRY WITH A MORAL.—Architects about to compete in designs for building the new Palace of Justice will doubtless bear in mind the saying that Justice is blind. Therefore they will very likely omit to make proper arrangements for lighting that edifice.—*Punch*.

THE ROYAL EDINBURGHEN.—Our heir apparent's affection for the cigar endears him to all persons of taste. But it may not be generally known, because it is not true, that Prince Alfred owes his new title to the playful resolve of his brother to prevent the Duke's calling him "AVULD REEKIE."—*Punch*.

INTERESTING.

Dear Mr. Punch.—I read the other day that "the Judges were Churched." I hope they are all as well as can be expected.

Yours truly,

LAVINIA D. RAMSBOTHAM.

Theodore-Hookham Cottage. *Punch*.

SNIP, SNAP!—When the journeymen tailors struck the other day they displayed an ignorance of natural philosophy which a paternal government is anxious to remove. They were not aware of the reverberation of force—in plain words did not know that when you strike an object it strikes back with exactly the same force. In order to show this rebound, the Chancellor of the Exchequer is going to claim Income Tax from the tailors who were proved to be earning three pounds a week. On the whole they won't win much by their recent game of Poole.

Fam.

STATISTICS.

THE BRITISH MUSEUM.—The number of persons admitted to the British Museum during the year 1865 shows a continual decrease. In 1860 the number was 587,000; 1861, 642,000; 1862, 395,000; 1863, 441,000; 1864, 432,300; 1865, 370,000; or nearly 170,000 persons fewer than came as lately as six years since. The decrease in the number of visits of readers to the reading-room within the same period has been not less extraordinary, and amounts to more than 27,000; every department shows the same depletion. The grand totals of the first and last years above-named are 672,674 and 477,650.

NOTWITHSTANDING recent monetary difficulties the traffic of our great railways has moved on very well this half-year. The receipts of the Caledonian to May 27th amounted to 454,118*l*, against 418,723*l*; of the Great Eastern to 702,935*l*, against 680,150*l*; of the Great Northern to 749,267*l*, against 712,202*l*; of the Great Western to 1,173,698*l*, against 1,116,094*l*; of the Lancashire and Yorkshire to 914,206*l*, against 778,010*l*; of the London, Brighton, and South Coast to 413,915*l*, against 369,239*l*; of the London, and North-Western to 2,294,300*l*, against 2,166,510*l*; of the London and South-Western to 488,054*l*, against 455,471*l*; of the Manchester, Sheffield, and Lincolnshire to 428,913*l*, against 365,039*l*; of the Midland to 1,089,069*l*, against 946,937*l*; of the North British to 411,671*l*, against 386,604*l*; of the North-Eastern to 1,392,713*l*, against 1,284,187*l*; and of the South-

Eastern to 372,785*l*, against 343,862*l*. The additional extent of way now in working on the systems named, as compared with May, 1865, is as follows:—Caledonian, 10 miles; Great Eastern, 39*1*/₂ miles; Great Northern, 18 miles; Great Western, 12 miles; Lancashire and Yorkshire, *nil*; London, Brighton, and South Coast, 26 miles; London and North-Western, *nil*; London and South-Western, 36*1*/₂ miles; Manchester, Sheffield, and Lincolnshire, 3*1*/₂ miles; Midland, 25*1*/₂ miles; North British, 3*1*/₂ miles; North-Eastern, 36*1*/₂ miles; and South-Eastern, 7 miles.

PROCRUSTES' IRON BED.

COME, young and old; come, grave and gay;
Come, rich; come, poor, deformed and fair;
Come, ye who halt upon the way,
And ye who have a joy to spare;
Come from the halls of joy and mirth,
Where luxury's broad feast is spread;
Come from the homes of want and dearth—
Come try Procrustes' iron bed!

Look in the palace and the hut—
O'er blooming country and stone-girt town,
Where doors are uninvitingly shut,
And blinds are always closely down.
Tramp over parlour, and hall, and stair—
Mark where the inmates lightest tread,
And in the gloomiest closet there
You'll find Procrustes' iron bed!

I see in your hand the glistening cup—
Ah, drunkard! 'tis mellow, this maddening juice!
Yea, though an adder's head sprang up,
Such a brave draught would not lose;
Drink till the brain reels on its throne,
And reason's last dim ray has fled;
Then—then thou art Procrustes' own—
Go lie upon his iron bed!
And nevermore while life is thine,
Wilt thou be one moment part;
Throughout the long, long years of time
Each hour fresh anguish will impart.
Come while the noon's hot splendour lights
The glory of the rolling land;
Come ere the dim hours of the night,
And give to him your trembling hand.
This is the fate of every soul!
This is the end of love, of all
That made your life a glowing goal.
Now only dust and ashes fall
Into that life. Come ere the sun
Turns to the west—ere the daylight dies;
Come with your hopes, undone, undone!
Come with your bitter, prayerful cries.
Come, young; come, old; come, grave; come, gay;
Come, rich; come, poor, deformed and fair;
Come, ye who halt upon the way,
And ye who have a joy to spare;
Come from the halls of joy and mirth,
Where luxury's broad feast is spread;
Come from the homes of want and dearth,
Come try Procrustes' iron bed! M. E. W.

HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

MATERIALS FOR CLEANING BRASS, &c.—Rotten-stone, 4 ounces; oxalic acid, one ounce; sweet oil, one ounce and a half; spirits of turpentine, enough to make a paste. Apply with a little water, and rub with soft leather.

GUTTA PERCHA CEMENT.—Dissolve a quantity of gutta percha in chloroform in quantity to make a fluid of honey-like consistence. When spread it will dry in a few moments. Heat the surfaces at a fire or gas flame until softened, and then apply them together. Small patches of leather can be thus cemented on boots, etc., so as almost to defy detection, and some shoemakers employ it with great success for this purpose. It is waterproof, and will answer almost anywhere unless exposed to heat, which softens it.

oIL APPLIED TO LEATHER.—Oils should not be applied to dry leather, as they invariably injure it. If you wish to oil a harness, wet it over night, cover it with a blanket, and in the morning it will be moist and supple. Then apply neatfoot oil in small quantities, and with so much elbow grease as will ensure its disseminating itself throughout the leather. A soft, pliant harness is easy to handle, and lasts longer than a neglected one. Never use vegetable oils on leather, and among animal oils neatfoot is the best.

KEEP THE HEAD COOL.—We have often spoken of the evil of sleeping on feather pillows. Many persons have got into the habit of sleeping on hard beds, but the fact that hard pillows are, if possible, more necessary than beds few have learned. Hair pillows are very good, but on the whole rather warm. Oat straw affords one of the very best. Let any person who is

troubled with headache, restlessness, dreaming and nightmare, rush of blood to the head, drowsiness in the morning, try for one month the oat straw bed and pillow; he will become convinced of their good effects.

HOP BEER.—This beverage is easily manufactured, and, if made according to the following instructions, will keep for six or eight months. To make fifteen gallons of hop beer, take twelve ounces of hops, six quarts of molasses, ten eggs. Put the hops in a bag, and boil them fifteen minutes in three pailfuls of water. Put in the molasses while hot, and pour immediately into a small cask, which can be made perfectly airtight, and put in the remainder of the water cold. Let the mixture stand until cool, then add the eggs. The beer will not ferment in cold weather unless put in quite a warm place.

GEMS.

He who will hear no counsel, cannot be helped.
'Tis much better to be thought a fool, than to be a knave.

CIVIL, obliging words cost but little, and do a great deal of good.

EXPRESSION alone can invest beauty with supreme and lasting command over the eye.

SELF-DENIAL leads to the most exalted pleasures and the conquest of evil habits is the most glorious triumph.

It is not work that kills men; it is worry. Work is healthy; you cannot put more on a man than he can bear. It is not the revolution that destroys the machinery, but the friction. Fear creates acids; but love and trust are sweet juices.

DRUNKENNESS.—It is better for a man to be subject to any vice than to drunkenness; for all other vanities and sins are recovered, but the drunkard will never shake off the delight of baseness: for the longer it possesses a man, the more he will delight in it, and the older he grows, the more he will be subject to it; for it dulls the spirits, and destroyeth the body, as ivy doth the old tree; or as the worm that engendereth in the kernel of the nut.

MISCELLANEOUS.

In Italy there is one theatre for every 75,000 of the inhabitants.

As a contrast, it may be mentioned that the Bank of England rate of discount on the 1st June last year was reduced from 4 to 3*1*/₂ per cent.; now it is 10 per cent.

The Abbé Richard has represented to the French Academy of Sciences that in digging a well he has discovered an ancient flint workshop containing the usual hammers, anvils, arrow heads, &c.

A very handsome altar-cloth, which it is understood has been partly worked by the Hon. Mrs. Wellesley and other ladies, now decorates the altar in St. George's Chapel, Windsor Castle.

Mr. GEORGE PEABODY has been notified, by the United States Assessor, to make a return of his income since September, 1862, for the purpose of taxation, under the revenue laws of the United States.

The marriage gift of Prince Teck to the Princess Mary Adelaide is a splendid diamond and ruby ring. The lockets for the bridesmaids of the Princess are of crystal, with diamond and ruby monograms of the Princess Mary and Prince Teck on the surface.

LORD PALMERSTON's prophetic words are quoted all over Europe at present, and his foresight does seem wonderful to have enabled him to say that, "the question of the Duchies will be a match which will ignite the whole of Europe."

THE coffin which contains the mortal remains of Gustave III. requiring repairs, was recently opened in presence of the King and Queen of Sweden: the face of the deceased was found to be in perfect preservation.

THE House of Commons has agreed to give the Princess of Cambridge a marriage portion of £2000 a year, in addition to the annuity of £3,000 which she receives already. The proposition was warmly received, and Prince Teck was much complimented in the House of Commons.

Two remarkable pictures have just been purchased on account of the city of Paris from M. Boitelle, Senator, formerly Prefect of Police. One is a view of the Hôtel de Ville in 1751, at the time of the *église* given by the municipality in celebration of the marriage of the Duke de Bourgogne, son of Louis XV. The other is a representation of the Palace of the Tuilleries in 1753. They are both the production of a French artist, M. Raguillet.

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NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

C. COLLIER.—Look in your Dictionary.

INQUISTIVE.—Apply direct to Messrs. Pitman, Paternoster Row, E.C.

MEDICUS.—Do not attempt any remedy without the advice of a medical man. You should consult a surgeon.

GRIMSBY, a German, twenty-eight, merchant and ship broker, would like to find a better half.

M. W.—The average daily water supply in London is thirty gallons to each person.

J. B.—Seven hundred thousand tons of soda, worth about five millions sterling, are annually consumed in England.

LILIAN.—Your writing is good, and quite suitable for a house of business.

ANNIE W., nineteen, dark hair, blue eyes, middle height; would like a respectable young man about her own age.

W. G. H., twenty-four, 5 ft. 6 in. in height, dark hair, dark complexion, good looking, and in a good situation as a miller.

BEVERLEY, twenty, 5 ft. 9 in. in height, a clerk in a good position. The lady must be very tall and dark, either French, Italian, or Spanish, and a Roman Catholic.

GUSTAV FRIED.—Any dealer in merschaum would put your pipe in order at a trifling cost. Do not make the attempt yourself.

W. D. L. AND J. W.—"W. D. L.", nineteen, medium height, dark, good looking; "J. W.", seventeen, fair, and medium height, would like to hear from "Louisa" and "Sarah."

D. J.—If your passing the examination depends solely upon the quality of your handwriting, we cannot advise you to make the attempt.

BERTHA WHITE, twenty-one, of respectable parents, but reduced in circumstances, would like a respectable mechanic. Looks no object. Age from twenty-five to thirty.

WHITE VIOLET is eighteen, fair, dark eyes, and light hair, medium height; a foreigner, but knows English perfectly. Handwriting good.

TILLY B., nineteen, tall, very pretty, of very respectable parents; the gentlemen must be of amiable disposition, tall, and dark, with whiskers and moustache, and good looking.

A. K. B., twenty-four, 5 ft. 11 in. in height, black curly hair, whiskers and moustache, good tempered and fond of music, and holds a very good situation in an inland town in the North of Ireland.

J. C.—The quantity of water used and wasted at the burning of the Houses of Parliament, in 1834, was equal to a pond one acre in area and 12 ft. deep. Twenty-three jets of water are said to have been playing at the same time.

ALICE—Hair a pretty brown. Do not fret about the gray hair. Truly, our eyes are not keen enough to perceive it, but if, as you say, you are only eighteen, time and a quiet mind will remove the defect.

ALLIE, eighteen, dark, brown hair, bright hazel eyes, very good looking, about the middle height. The gentleman must be dark, with whiskers and moustache; tall, and of amiable disposition.

CHINGACHGOOK.—The best recipe for keeping the teeth white and in health, is to rinse the mouth with cold water after every meal. In the morning use a little salt and a soft brush. If you must use a powder, use rose tooth powder.

MAGGY M. J., twenty, 5 ft. in height, fair, good housekeeper, can use her needle; is of respectable parents, but has no money. A respectable mechanic, aged twenty-five, preferred. Good looks no object.

WILHELM, twenty-one, 5 ft. 9 in. in height, well educated, and a clerk in a lucrative profession. At present, his income is but small, but his prospects are good; would prefer an English lady residing in or near Edinburgh.

ALBERT S. desires a fair young lady, with light hair, who would give him all her heart. She must be domesticated, &c.; money no object. "Albert" is in a comfortable position; twenty-two, 5 ft. 5 in. in height, dark complexion, and very good looking.

HARRY, twenty-seven, 5 ft. 7 in. in height, a compositor, and respectably connected. Respondent must be of possessing appearance, cheerful, good tempered, and fond of home. "Harry" is dark, and would prefer the lady to be the same.

LOLA twenty-eight, a native of France, dark, dark whiskers, little moustache, of a good family, has had a good education, and is a good musician, would like to meet with a young person equally educated; a little money would be desirable.

HERALDINA.—Prince Alfred sits in the House of Lords by the trip rights of three peerages, Scotch, English, and Irish—viz. Duke of Edinburgh, Earl of Kent, and Earl of Ulster. Is this by which His Royal Highness will be known and he succeeds to the Sovereign Dukedom of

Saxe-Coburg, is literally a new creation, for although the brother and nephew of George the Third, the two last Dukes of Gloucester, were also Dukes of Edinburgh, the latter title was not used, the Crown having had no power to create a Scottish peerage since the Act of Union in 1707. The last Duke of Gloucester and Edinburgh, George the Third's nephew, died in 1805. The Prince of Wales is Duke of Rothsay by birth, that title having been from time immemorial held by the heirs of the Scottish throne.

C. B., a clerk of steady habits, who is not hard to please. The respondent must be about nineteen, dark, tall, and able to play on the piano. "C. B." is twenty-two, passable in looks, well built, and tall, with a salary only of \$60. at present. Rather passionate in temper, but forgiving.

W. L. D., twenty-three, 5 ft. 5 1/2 in. in height, good looking, fair, round, laughing face, brown whiskers and moustache, and 90/- per annum, with good prospects. The young lady must be good looking. A respectable tradesman's daughter, with a tolerable education, would do.

CLARICE AND CONSTANCE.—"Clarice" is eighteen, 5 ft. in height, dark blue eyes, brown hair, and loving disposition. "Constance" is eighteen, rather tall, dark hair and eyes, and thoroughly domesticated. Respondents must not be over twenty-one.

ALMA MATER.—The constituency, &c. &c. the persons who elect the M.P.'s for the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, are the Doctors and Masters of Arts whose names are on the books. The number who vote at the former is 3,842; at the latter, 4,847.

GUSY and POLLY.—"Gusy," eighteen, middle height, not bad-looking, rather dark, fond of music, and well educated. "Polly," seventeen, rather tall, good figure, dark brown hair, fond of music and company, and well educated, are in want of husbands.

A LONDONER.—A clerk's salary depends upon his ability, and upon the nature of his employment. Judging from your handwriting, we should advise you to try the draper's shop, especially as you seem to have an inclination in that direction.

SOUS.

Oh! for balmy leaves again,
And merry tuneful hours!

For cooling shades, and rippling rills,
And birds, and bees, and flowers!

Pink buds are on the apple trees;
The hills and vales are green,
And butterflies, like flakes of gold,
Along the roads are seen.

A deeper blue is in the sky;
No living thing is still;
The building birds are here and there,
A straw in every hill.

No idle one but me to-day:
Yet here would I recline,
And dream the hours away, and sip
The sunlight's fragrant wine.

And call white Winter but the ghost
Of some fair Summer dead—
A ghost that walked a cheerless night,
And on the morrow fled.

C. C.—1854, and by that they were commonly known; when they had been called by that name awhile, the vicious, and冥冥中，the ungodly, called all *Protestants* that were strict and serious in a holy life, were they ever so conformable. So that, while in a bishop's mouth the name signified a non-conformist, in that of an ignorant drunkard's or a swearer's mouth, it signified any godly, obedient Christian.

ELLEN and MARGARET (two sisters) and KATE (a widow), to three steady young men. "Ellen" is twenty-five, dark brown wavy hair, grey eyes, small mouth, good teeth, regular features, and is of the medium height. She is of a quiet, reserved disposition, fond of home, a good housekeeper, and would prefer a respondent in the merchant service. "Margaret" twenty, has abundant dark brown hair and eyes, good complexion, slight, graceful figure, and of medium height, quick tempered, but merry and lively; a sailor preferred. "Kate," twenty-seven, fair, hazel eyes, dark hair, good figure, of middle height, a quiet but forgiving temper, and a good housekeeper. She has one child.

W. II.—Aerial navigation is by no means a subject of modern speculation. Many fabulous accounts of the doings of the ancients in this department of science have reached us through the traditions of the elder. We are told that they constructed artificial wings, and by attaching them to the body, undertook by muscular exertion to rival the birds of the air. In the fourth century one Archytas constructed a wooden pigeon that could fly by means of an enclosed spirit; but the author fails to tell us what this spirit was. At a much later period the famous Bishop Willmots was so confident of success in this art, that he intimates that in future ages it would be as usual to hear a man call for his wings, when going a journey, as to call for his boots. Experimenters in aerial navigation, however, when they came to better understand the elastic properties of the air and the gases, dropped the wing theory, and turned their attention to balloons as the more feasible scheme. The first air balloon was constructed in 1732.

COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED:—

HARVEY ST. CLARE is responded to by—"Blossom," eighteen, medium height, fair, blue eyes, and amiable; no fortune, but will receive a small income at the death of her surviving parent; and—"Lottie," twenty-one, good looking, fond of music, singing, and dancing, and will have 1,000/- on her wedding day.

DICK by—"Lizzie," nineteen, medium height, fair, good temper, loving disposition, petite in figure, not a first-rate musician, but thinks she could play and sing well enough to please her husband.

RICHARD by—"Alice," eighteen, light curly hair, dark brown eyes, fair, slight figure, and an income of \$600. per annum. "Milly P.—" eighteen, a little below the medium height, dark hair, and light eyes; and—"Maud," seventeen, medium height, and rather dark.

MARIAH by—"Kate Bristol," who is only a poor servant, but can read and do needlework beautifully, and also cook; and—"Vida," seventeen, middle height, brown hair, and dark grey eyes.

SAMSON by—"Amy," eighteen, not very tall, dark, and a tradesman's daughter.

SUFFIELD by—"Julia Montgomery," seventeen, tall, slight, and pretty, with dark brown eyes and hair, and well educated.

ESTHER by—"Minnie C.," nineteen, flaxen hair, and blue eyes.

OSCAR by—"Emily B.," eighteen, a brunette, medium height, dark hair and eyes, and very affectionate.

LONELY WIDOW by—"A Lonely Widow," forty-one, with two children, six and eight years of age, sweet tempered and good dispositions, for whom he would like to meet with a good mother; "A Lonely Widow" has good health, constant employment, and a good home, and could give good references for sobriety and industry; and—"H. H.," a widow, forty-three, and in fair circumstances.

G. W. by—"E. P. G.," nineteen, the son of a tradesman in a large business.

MARIA WALKER by—"W. C. G.," who is well connected, has a shop of his own, besides being in a situation which brings him in 100/- a year, stands 5 ft. 7 in. in height, auburn hair, whiskers, and moustache, and is twenty-seven years of age. Rather hasty in temper, but very forgiving.

MARIA by—"J. Roberts," a widow, thirty-nine, with three children.

ANSWER by—"Earnest," a widower, forty, 5 ft. 8 in. in height, without family, good connections, and in easy circumstances.

LILLIE by—"Willie," nineteen, dark hair and eyes, and an income of 350/- a year.

LUCILLE by—"A. V. R.," twenty-eight, dark, rather short, in possession of 1,600/- with expectations on the death of his grandmother, whose age is eighty.

WILLIE BOOM by—"Charles W.," twenty-four, of good family, in fair circumstances, resides in London, and is well educated.

Gwenie MINX by—"Gwynne Walls," thirty-three, 5 ft. 6 1/2 in. in height, good looking, dark hair, dark brown whiskers, full set of pure white teeth, robust build, sweet temper, very sober, industrious, has a little money, and is a corn merchant by trade; and—"Cleco."

LILLIE by—"Ambrose," twenty-two, dark eyes, black hair, 5 ft. 6 1/2 in. in height.

NELLIE by—"Alberto," twenty-one, light hair, 4 ft. 10 in. in height.

ALICE by—"Osmond," twenty-one, dark, black curly hair, and very fond of music, and holding a very good situation; and—"Sydney," eighteen, rather tall, good looking, and will have some property at the age of twenty-one.

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